

MILITARY

ILLUSTRATED  PAST & PRESENT

No. 29

OCTOBER 1990

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LIGHT INFANTRY CAPS,
1770-1799

MACEDONIAN 'WHITE-
SHIELDS' REGIMENT,
3rd/2nd Cs. BC

CANADIANS AT YPRES

1815: NUMBERING OF
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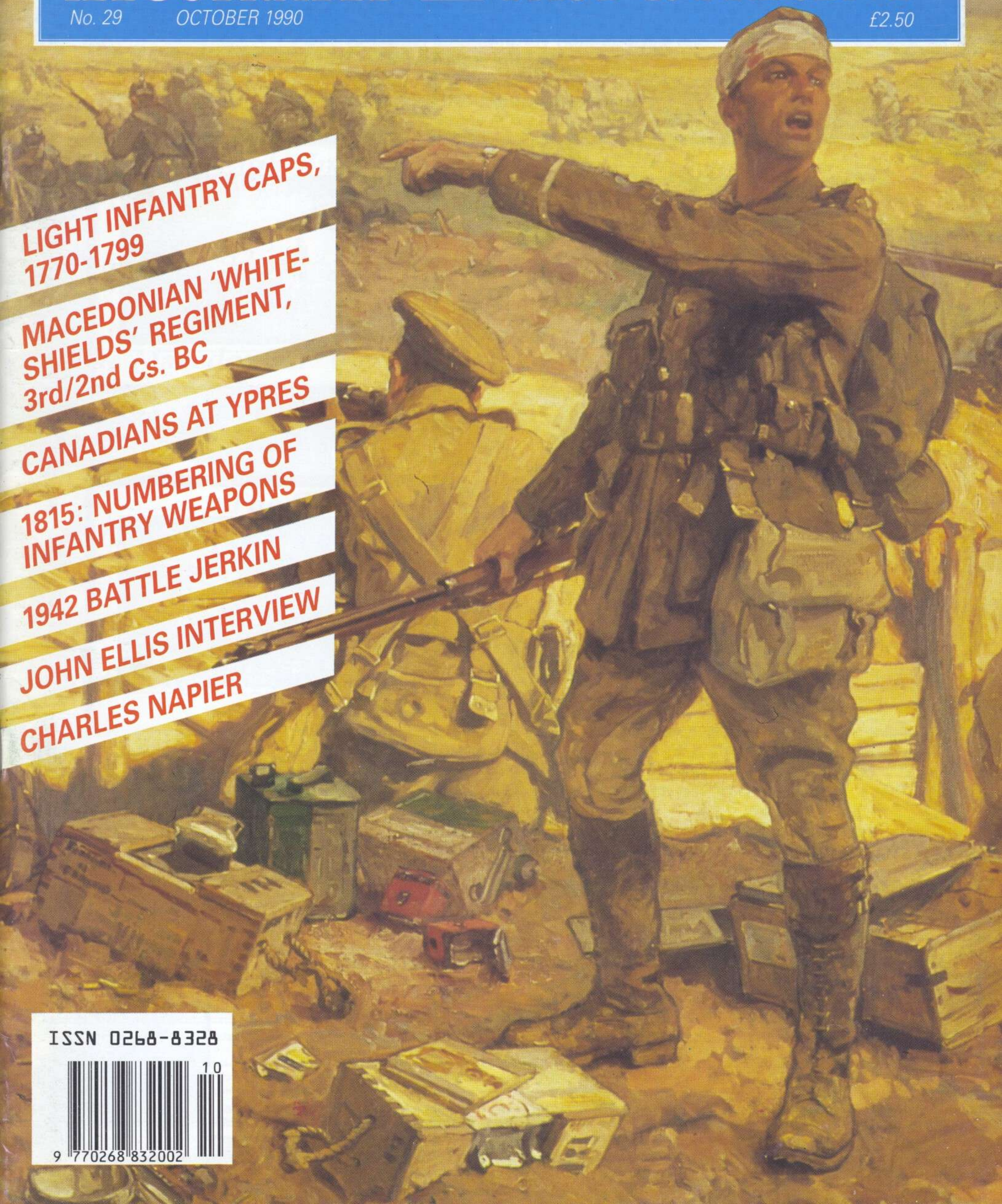
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Our cover illustration is a detail from Richard Jack's painting of Canadian infantry at Second Ypres; see article p.25. (Courtesy Canadian War Museum)

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EDITORIAL

Our first-time contributors to this issue include **Dr. Nicholas Sekunda**, whose work will be well-known to students of Classical and Hellenistic Greece from his Osprey books on *The Ancient Greeks* and *The Army of Alexander the Great*. Nick was born in 1953, and attended Manchester University where he received a Ph D in Ancient History and Archaeology. He has worked as a Research Fellow at Monash University, Melbourne; as a freelance researcher and writer; and is currently helping to compile a 'Lexicon of Greek Personal Names', a British Academy project housed at Oxford University. His rather less sedentary activities include service with 4 Para, 1975-81, leaving with the rank of lieutenant. Nick was awarded the Cross of Merit in Bronze by the Polish Government in Exile (London) in 1984 in recognition of services to the Polish community in Nottingham during the period of martial law in Poland.

Collectors of early 19th century firearms may be intrigued by our article on the numbering of muskets in the Wellingtonian army by **Graham Priest**. Born in 1945 in Bath, Graham obtained a BEd from Bristol University, and is currently head teacher of a Wiltshire primary school. He has published articles in many firearms and antique magazines in Britain and the USA, and a book on *The Brown Bess Bayonet 1720-1860*. He bought his first edged weapon for five shillings in 1959, and carried it home on the crossbar of his bicycle; he later specialised in the neglected subject of socket bayonets, partly out of poverty, and now has a



Nicholas Sekunda

comprehensive collection from the 18th century to the present from many countries.

Friends of Historex Show

The British Flat Figure Society, in association with Chequers Travel, invite all modellers (in any medium) to join them in the third annual trip to attend the 'Friends of Historex Modelling Show' in Paris on 23-25 November. Provisional details are available from J.L. Nolan-Burrows, 23 Glastonbury Court, Talbot Rd., West Ealing, London W13 0SL — please send an SAE. Rough provisional cost is estimated at £125 per head. The Society stress the importance of early booking.

Buying a battlefield

The Butte de Warlencourt, which marks the limit reached by British troops in the battle of the Somme, 1916, is to become a permanent war memorial; it is being bought from the French farmer owner by Britain's Western Front Association (1914-18) — which is not an ex-serviceman's organisation, but a gathering of all ages and both sexes who are interested in the First World War. The cost of approximately £8,000 is being underwritten from WFA funds. The WFA, which has over 2,730 members, may be contacted by interested readers at 47 Smith St., London SW3 4EP. The Association



Graham Priest

are to be congratulated on this unselfish and imaginative project, and deserve every support.

Teutoburger Wald: new discoveries?

We are informed that a Royal Army Medical Corps officer, Capt. Tony Clunn, may have discovered the long-sought site of the battle of the Teutoburger Wald — the disastrous defeat of three Augustan legions under P. Quintilius Varus in AD 9. The site had been generally placed in the Detmold area; but more than 750 alternatives have been suggested over the years. The archaeological team assembled by the Osnabrück Museum of Archaeology and Culture under Dr. Wolfgang Schlüter are extremely confident of the importance of the site discovered in 1987 near that town by Capt. Clunn.

Following the lead of the 19th century archaeologist Momsen, and Dr. Schlüter's advice, Capt. Clunn used a sensitive metal detector to survey an area north of Osnabrück near a known ancient road. He found a large number of Augustan coins; and subsequent digs over the past two years have unearthed many more —

as well as signs of encampment, bronze artefacts, tools, beads, lead sling shot, a breastplate, and — in January this year — a helmet-mask. The coins include examples of a special minting associated specifically with Varus, previously found only on the River Lippe near Detmold.

Capt. Clunn and his German colleagues are convinced that the finds so far are only the tip of the iceberg; digging over a wider area will continue for at least two more years. Capt. Clunn, who works at the British Military Hospital in Hannover, is currently surveying adjacent woodland. His excitement at his discovery — the kind of triumph of which every amateur archaeologist dreams — is tempered with regret at the knowledge that his posting to Germany cannot last much longer. Artefacts discovered at the site are on display in the Osnabrück Museum.

Artefacts unearthed from the site near Osnabrück, including the familiar Roman dolabra military pickaxe, coins, a bronze buckle, a brooch, a harness (?) pendant in phallic form, other bronze fragments, and the helmet-mask. (Crown Copyright)



Video Releases to Buy: 'Channel Islands Occupied'

(Tomohawk Films)

'Great Battles — Turning Points of World War Two'

(Video Collection)

'D-Day: Assault on Fortress Europe'

(Castle/Hendring)

'Waffen-SS: Hitler's Fighting Force'

(Castle/Hendring)

'Elite Forces: Paratroopers 1940-1945'

(Castle/Hendring)

'Fighter Aces' (Castle/Hendring)

'In the Cockpit' (Castle/Hendring)

The 50th anniversary of the beginning of the occupation of the Channel Islands in June 1940 has inevitably inspired the production of documentary films commemorating the event. Peter Batty's *Swastika on British Soil*, made for Channel Island Television and recently broadcast by Channel 4, dealt mainly with the experience of occupation, and commendably included interviews with Islanders, German soldiers, and some unfortunates who had been incarcerated in one of the four slave labour camps. It controversially con-

sidered the actions of informants and collaborators, an issue which continues to be shrouded in official secrecy. In contrast, Brian Matthew's *Channel Islands Occupied*, sponsored by the Channel Islands Tourist Board, avoids such sensitive issues, but nonetheless has much to interest the military enthusiast. Indeed, the two films can be considered as complementary.

Matthew's film makes full use of documentary footage, personal recollections, diagrams and specially shot material. Readers of 'MI' will doubtless be interested on the footage devoted to Richard Haumes' fascinating German Occupation Museum: among the relics seen are uniforms, headgear, medals and other militaria left behind by the Germans. Some time is also spent exploring the complex tunnel systems built by slave labour, the vast underground hospital, and the massive German fortifications. Fascinating facts emerge: some of the heavy guns installed by the Germans were taken from a captured Russian dreadnought. Newsreel footage of a Ger-

man band marching down a British street provides a chilling reminder of what life might have been like for the whole of Britain had Operation 'Sea-lion' been successfully implemented. This video has been made with care, and has certainly whetted this reviewer's appetite for a visit to the islands.

Great Battles — Turning Points of the Second World War deals with three crucial conflicts: Midway, El Alamein and Stalingrad. The Midway sequence uses both black and white and colour footage, the latter taken largely from John Ford's famous documentary *Battle of Midway* (1942). Likewise, the remaining sections draw heavily on Roy Boulting's *Desert Victory* (1943), and Leonid Varamov's *Stalingrad* (1943). With a total running time of one hour, each part is short on time: for example, the Stalingrad section hardly mentions the difficulties caused by below-freezing temperatures. However, each section includes interviews with survivors and military historians, as well as specially drawn maps. ITN reporter

Michael Nicholson provides the commentary.

Many of the recent plethora of World War Two documentaries released on video seem to consist almost entirely of archive footage unsupported by maps, often necessary for real intelligibility, or by the personal recollections which breathe life into the subject. When tackling large subjects, such films rarely add anything to what has already been accomplished by, for example, Thames Television's outstanding *World at War* series. However, those dealing with more limited, specialized subject-matter often succeed in highlighting areas which have been ignored hitherto by television. Four new releases by Castle/Hendring include examples of both types.

D-Day: Assault on Fortress Europe tells the familiar story of the biggest amphibious invasion of all time, from conception to successful conclusion. *Waffen-SS: Hitler's Elite Fighting Force* attempts the difficult task of charting the history of this notorious organisation; while not in any way a whitewash, the film maintains that the Waffen-SS have been subjected to disproportionately high condemnation for war-crimes, par-

ON THE SCREEN

THE AUCTION SCENE

This column has remarked previously on the number of events, including sales, spawned by the 50th anniversary of the Second World War, and of the Battle of Britain in particular. One of the biggest auctions is that arranged by Sotheby's to be held on Saturday 15 September 1990 at the RAF Museum, Hendon. The catalogue lists over 500 lots relating to the RFC and RAF. It is pleasing to note that Sotheby's are donating 50 per cent of their vendor's commission to three main RAF-connected charities.

One attractive feature of this sale which will particularly please the smaller collector is that there is a range of lower-priced items among the memorabilia; this means that there is at least a chance for the ordinary collector to acquire something. Needless to say there are a number of far more expensive items, including a Hurricane, a Spitfire, and (a rarity) a Westland Lysander — estimated at £250,00 to £300,00 — as used for so many clandestine flights into occupied Europe. Between these extremes there are plenty of other items such as paintings, log books, uniforms and a range of medals.

The medals will almost certainly do extremely well, for this market is very much affected by fashion. At the moment certain areas are fairly static while others are flourishing. Prices for single Victorian campaign medals remain very stable, mostly around the £150 — £300 mark, and there is little sign of a growing demand. Earlier and rarer items, such as Peninsular gold medals and groups, are fetching prices generally well above the estimates placed on them by experienced auctioneers. Similarly First World War groups, even the previously undervalued 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred', are rising in price. Medals of casualties are also fetching good prices, and these trends are apparent at all the various sale rooms. Needless to say the rarity still realises the top prices, such as £13,000 for a Victoria Cross awarded

during the Matabele Rebellion of 1896 included in one of Glendening's recent sales. At Christie's medal sale on 24 July a very unusual Victoria Cross sold for £19,800. It was unique in being the first Cross to be forfeited as a result of misconduct by the holder (in the entire history of the medal only eight have been forfeited). This example was originally granted to Midshipman Edward St. John Daniel for his bravery during the Crimean War, and forfeited in September 1861 for a disgraceful offence. There are also clear indications that Second World War named groups are in demand; and since some of the RAF groups are to well-known fliers, high prices may be confidently expected.

The most important sale of arms and armour to be held recently was the Sotheby's Visser Sale, which offered some of the highest quality items seen on the market for some time. There were many foreign bidders present, and prices were mostly around the estimates. A superb double-barrelled over-and-under wheellock pistol made in Sedan realised £67,100; while a pair of silver-mounted wheellock pistols for the Trabanten-Leib Garde circa 1590 sold for £45,100. The second part of this most important sale will be held in December.

There were recent sales at the rooms of Phillips, Weller & Duffy, Wallis & Wallis and Kent Sales. It is interesting to note that Wallis & Wallis are one of the very few auctioneers that do not include printed estimates in their catalogues: guidance will be given if the rooms are contacted. It would be fascinating to know if this has any effect on the bidding, although there is never any lack of bidders at these regular sales. The rooms always include a wide range of material covering all aspects of collecting.

Kent Sales are another exception in that they operate a 'sale by tender' system. The sale on 27 June included all kinds of items likely to appeal to

more concerned with individuals and tactics. It is here that the lack of personal recollection is most obvious: little is discovered about individual personalities.

Aviation buffs will certainly enjoy Castle/Hendring's four documentaries under the generic title *In the Cockpit*, all dealing with modern military aircraft. *Fly Low, Hit Hard* concentrates on ground-attack aircraft such as the F-4 Phantom, Israeli Kfir and Anglo-French Jaguar. *Target Tank* features combat helicopters such as the Huey, Cobra, Lynx and Apache. *Eagles in the Sky* shows fighter aircraft such as the F-14 Tomcat and F-15 Eagle; and lastly *Red Star* concerns the modern Soviet Air Force. These American-made documentaries are international in scope and combine official footage, combat footage and manufacturers' promotional material.

Stephen J. Greenhill

the ordinary collector, and their tender system seems to suit the collector more than the dealers — most of their business is outside the trade. Whether by accident or design Kent Sales seem rather to specialise in German material, and still turn up a treasure or two, such as a set of SS goblets. Their results indicate that swords are still in demand whereas bayonets are very much in the doldrums. Kent Arms confirm the upward trend in the prices of First and Second World War medals.

Bonhams are holding another of their sales of militaria on 1 August, with 281 lots including a lock of the hair of the First Duke of Wellington — estimate £400 — £600. There are also a number of lots of police badges, and it will be interesting to see if the recently published book on British badges will have any effect on prices.

For collectors of firearms and shooters in the United Kingdom there is the prospect of yet more problems in the future, for the European Parliament and Commissioners are working on a common firearms policy. Needless to say many of the sections indicate a very unbalanced and emotional outlook. One of the proposals is to take a cut-off date of 1870 for antiques, and one or two earlier forms of ignition systems prior to this date will not be counted as antique. If the law goes through the various processes and becomes 'Euro-law' then there are bound to be repercussions in the trade, and once again the legitimate shooter and collector will be penalised. A concerted effort to amend this and other repressive measures is being mounted by the shooting and collecting groups in the United Kingdom spearheaded by the National Pistol Association. One big problem is the cost of lobbying in Brussels, and the NPA is in urgent need of assistance; contributions will be gratefully received.

Frederick Wilkinson

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ticularly on the Eastern Front. *Elite Forces: Paratroopers 1940-1945* begins with the successes of German airborne forces under Maj. Gen. Kurt Student in Norway, Belgium, France and Crete. It then focusses on the Allied use of airborne units, and describes operations in North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy. Some time is spent on Operation 'Market Garden' and the US 101st Airborne's defence of Bastogne during the 'Battle of the Bulge'. *Fighter Aces* dwells briefly on the First World War, before moving on to the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War. In concentrating on German aces such as Erich Hartmann, Adolf Galland, Werner Moelders and Hans-Joachim Marseille the film covers much the same ground as Castle/Hendring's previous *History of the Luftwaffe*, (reviewed 'MI' No. 24). However, while that film concentrated on production and strategy, this release is

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British Light Infantry Caps, 1770-1799

MICHAEL BARTHORP

Paintings by RICHARD HOOK

The early decades of organised Light Infantry within the British Army have always attracted interest: in the popular imagination these troops are seen as an example of refreshing tactical innovation against a background of rigid orthodoxy. Their uniforms are seen as attractively pragmatic modifications; and their varied headgear, acquired at unit level and classifiable today only by research into individual examples, are a challenge to the historian.

Light Infantry was first introduced in the British Army on an 'ad hoc' basis during the Seven Years' War (1756-63), chiefly as a result of conditions encountered in North America. After that war, however, all light infantrymen reverted to their normal role in their battalions. Then, in November 1770, a tenth (Light Infantry) company was authorised for every Regiment of Foot, to be clothed and accoutred in a distinctive and suitable manner. The American War of Independence (1775-83), with fighting not only in North America but in the West Indies and Europe as well, gave a fresh impetus to the use of Light Infantry.

Thereafter the Light Companies remained on the establishment but, with the Army at peace except in India, their special training was neglected. The outbreak of the French Revolutionary War in 1793, and the use of massed skirmishers by the French citizen armies, showed up this neglect and recalled an earlier observation of Lord Townshend that 'it is not a Short Coat or Half-Gaiters (sic) that makes a Light infantry man'⁽¹⁾. The whole science of light infantry tactics had to be relearned under pressure of war — ultimately with great success, as demonstrated in the Peninsular campaign.

The shortened coat and half-gaiters had indeed been the outward sign of a light

infantryman since the formation of the Light Companies in 1770. So too had been his distinctive cap, instead of the universal hat or the bearskin caps of the Grenadier Companies. But whereas the clothing of Light Companies achieved a measure of uniformity within the Infantry as a whole, their headdress manifested a variety of different styles, some of which will be examined here.

'1771 PATTERN' CAPS

A Board of General Officers was convened in March 1771 to consider 'what kind of clothing and accoutrements may be best adapted for the use of the Light Company belonging to each of the marching Regiments of Foot'⁽²⁾. A sealed pattern of cap seems to have been decided upon, described by Thomas Simes in his *Military Guide for Young Officers* (1772) as 'black leather caps, with 3 chains round them, and a piece of plate upon the centre of the crown; in the front, G.R., a crown, and the number of the Regiment'.

This description apparently accords with an inspection report in 1775 of the 32nd's Light Company sergeants in 'chain-caps'; and with an officer's existing cap in the collection of the Scottish United Services Museum, except for a thistle in place of the number and the missing plate⁽³⁾. This cap was also observed by the artist, P.J. de Louthembourg,



Officer, Light Company, 67th Regt., c.1771. The cap appears to be of the first regulation pattern, approved in that year, but with more extensive feathers than the men's. (National Army Museum)

worn by the Light Company of the 6th Foot at the Camp of Exercise at Warley in October 1778, and illustrated by him in drawings and his painting *The Mock Attack*, now in the Royal Collection. This cap is shown at colour plate 1E.

If this was the regulation pattern, it clearly was not uniformly worn as the 69th's Light Company, which was also at Warley, was shown by de Louthembourg in the cap at plate 1B, which appears to have been adapted from the regulation hat. (Though outside the scope of this article, a further lack of uniformity is evident in *The Mock Attack* in the 69th's accoutrements; these differ from those of the 6th, which accord with the Light Infantry Regulations of 1771). How long the 69th's Light Company wore this headdress is not known, although ten years later they

were reported as having felt caps and 'not according to order'; by that time, however, the regulation cap had changed, as will be seen.

The 69th were not alone in this departure from regulations, as the 19th's and 24th's Light Companies were likewise reported on in 1777 and 1775 respectively. Whilst at Warley de Louthembourg also recorded another cap — of the Glamorgan Militia — the front and black feather of which were similar to the 69th's, but with a crest on top from which emerged a red mane.

The 'Minorca' caps

Although the regulation cap was approved in 1771 its specifications obviously took time to reach regiments, particularly those stationed abroad, who devised their own. Three such caps were recorded in the garrison of Minorca, probably by a local

artist, worn in the 11th, 13th and 25th Regiments of Foot. These units styled their new, tenth companies the 'Picquet Company' in the case of the first two, and the 'Highland Company' in the third which, though not a Highland regiment, had a Scottish connection with the city of Edinburgh. These caps are shown respectively at plates 1c, 1d and 1a, based on the Minorcan artist's paintings (of which one set is in the Royal Collection, another in the Scottish United Services Museum, and a third, predominantly of the 25th and possibly by another hand and at a slightly later date, in the National Army Museum).

The 11th and 25th caps were chiefly made of black fur or bearskin, probably from cut-down Grenadier caps; the former had in front a crown, 'G.R.' and 'XI', the latter a red and white plate bearing the motto 'Nemo Me Impune Lacessit' and a thistle. In the NAM paintings the 25th headdresses have a sprig of green leaves, the 'field sign' in common use by many European armies in the earlier part of the 18th century. The 13th cap, though similarly bagged to the 11th's, was otherwise quite different, being apparently a cut-down hat with a brown fur piece, considered by C.C.P. Lawson to be a fox's brush⁽⁴⁾, fixed laterally across the top.

The 'Herd cap', 5th Foot

The next cap to be considered, that of the 5th Foot's Light Company (plate 1f), resembled, in its essentials, that mentioned above for the Glamorgan Militia, having a peak, a turned-up frontal, a turban, and a crest holding a red mane. All its parts were of black leather except the turban of red cloth and the crest, which was of a brass framework with a lion's head and forepart in front. Also in brass were the reinforcing bars laterally across the crown, and the insignia on the frontal: St. George and the Dragon, above a circle enclosing a bugle-horn above the figure '5', placed centrally on a scroll inscribed 'Light Infantry'.

The badge of St. George had been granted by the 1747 Clothing Regulations, and confirmed by the 1751 Royal Warrant, to the 5th as one of the 'Six Old Corps'⁽⁵⁾ who, together with seven Royal regiments, were permitted special badges for use on their

Grenadier caps, Colours and drums, instead of the Royal Cypher and Crown.

An example of this cap, once belonging to Pte. William Herd, who fought in a number of engagements in North America and the West Indies, is now in the Wallis & Wallis Military Heritage Museum collection at Lewes, Sussex, but the turban has been lost⁽⁶⁾.

The 'Lambton cap', 68th Foot

The 1747 Regulations had expressly forbidden any further display of a regimental colonel's arms or crest, as had been common practice earlier in the century. Yet nearly 30 years later such a device appeared on a cap thought to have been worn by the 68th's Light Company (plate 1g). This regiment was



Above:

Cap of Private William Herd, 5th Foot, c.1775; the red turban is missing. (Wallis & Wallis Military Heritage Museum)

De Loutherbourg's drawings showing the 'chain-cap' as worn by the 6th Foot's Light Company in 1778 with, below, probably that of the Glamorgan Militia. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection)



Kings arms in

in the West Indies when Light Companies were authorised and so remote from regulations issued in London. It had been raised in 1758 by John Lambton, who remained its colonel until 1794, and whose crest was a ram's head. This device, together with Lambton's monogram surrounded by sprays of foliage, above the motto 'Faithful' on a scroll, all in brass, were placed on the frontal of this cap. The skull was made of brown leather, having a hardened comb or crest and with two semi-circular patches of red leather on either side.

According to regimental tradition the motto had been awarded for service at the Battle of St. Vincent in the West Indies in 1772. The regiment returned home in 1773, when the Lambton crest may have had to be removed; but the cap itself seems to have continued, as three years later a clothing bill specifies 'caps and combs'⁽⁷⁾

The Von Germann drawing

A black cap, somewhat similar in design to the 5th's pattern but without the peak, was worn by the 62nd Foot when forming part of General Burgoyne's expedition from Canada in 1777-78, according to a drawing by the Hessian officer Captain Friedrich von Germann, whose regiment served in the expedition. This cap had a black crest with a white mane, and a white button and loop at the left side (plate 1H).

Similar caps were apparently worn by the other regiments — 20th, 21st, 24th and 27th — as well as by the Royal Artillery, but with differently coloured manes; the 24th's was red. Their use was not confined to the Light Companies, for Lieutenant Thomas Amburey of the 24th recorded that 'commanding officers of the different regiments have received orders to reduce the men's coats into jackets, and their hats into caps as it will be more convenient for wood service, that when the army take the field, they will in a manner be all light infantry'⁽⁸⁾. That the caps were converted from



Metal helmet as worn by the 15th Light Dragoons until 1789; compare its design with the 5th Foot's leather cap. (National Army Museum)

Below centre:

Light Company men, 1779, in headdress similar to the 69th's (Scottish United Services Museum)



goons'⁽¹⁰⁾. Most Light Dragoons at this date wore what was officially described as a helmet and which, subject to minor regimental variations, consisted of a leather or metal skull, a metal crest on top with a mane, a turned-up metal frontal, and a turban round the base of the skull — in effect, similar to plate 1F but without the peak. The 45th's Light Company, therefore, may have been wearing something on these lines.

However, in the 1780s the Light Dragoons (except the 15th) began to adopt a 'helmet-cap' of a type often called after Colonel Banastre Tarleton, formerly of the 16th Light Dragoons, who had commanded the British Legion, a Loyalist force, in the southern American colonies from 1780. In its basic form the so-called Tarleton helmet consisted of a leather skull with a pleated turban enclosed by chains around the base, a peak, a feather or plume at the left side, and a black bearskin crest passing over the crown from front to rear. Tarleton himself was painted in this helmet by Sir Joshua Reynolds in January 1782 shortly after returning from America. Whether he was its inventor is uncertain, as there is evidence of its being worn in England as early as 1780. A Militia light infantryman of that date was drawn by an unknown artist in a helmet apparently of that type with a leopard-skin turban⁽¹¹⁾; and Paul Sandby's drawings of the Gordon Riots in that year show it worn by some Light Dragoons, for all of whom it was officially authorised eight years later. Thus it is possible that the Light Dragoon type of helmet worn in 1780-81 by the 45th's Light Company,

hats suggests that they were of felt, not leather as in the 5th.

Gibraltar 1781

During this war the garrison of Gibraltar⁽⁹⁾ was besieged by the Spaniards from 1779 to 1782. J.S. Copley's painting of the sortie made on 26-27 November 1781 by the combined Grenadier and Light Companies of the garrison includes a man whose short coat and half-gaiters suggest he is a light infantryman,

wearing a cap similar to plate 1E. Another picture of the sortie, an engraving after A.C.de Poggi, includes a complete Light Company from the left rear, with caps not unlike plate 1B but with the back flap vertical.

'Light Dragoon' caps

In 1780 and 1781 the 45th Foot was adversely reported on for its Light Company caps being 'not according to regulation, but more like the caps of the Light Dra-

which had left America in 1778, may also have been of this design.

'1784 PATTERN' CAPS

In 1782 a Board of General Officers expressed the view that 'the leathern caps, directed by His Majesty's regulations, to be provided for and worn by the Light Infantry companies, are very inconvenient, burthensome, fatiguing to the soldier, and have been found totally useless, upon all service'⁽¹²⁾. This presumably was the 'chain-cap' at plate Ie. In March 1784 another Board was convened to decide upon a more suitable pattern from a number submitted for approval, and on 11 June one was approved.

There is no record of what was examined, although the Board commented that 'a leathern cap, worn by some Light Infantry in the last war, had not been shown to the Board, and is induced, from the report of officers who have tried it to strongly recommend it, as most comfortable to the soldier and considerably less expensive than the cap approved of'⁽¹³⁾. The unseen cap may have been something like plate Ih, but no details were given; nor were any for the new regulation cap, finally approved by Royal Warrant dated 21 July 1784, other than its material — 'of black leather'.

In default of any documentary or pictorial evidence of this new official Light Company cap, and since such evidence as exists of light infantrymen post-1784 seems to indicate a continuance of the variety of such caps that pertained pre-1784, it is difficult to speculate upon its design. However, in view of the Tarleton cap's then increasing popularity among the Light Dragoons; the affection in which it was held by King George III as the only military headgear of purely British origin; its adoption in the Militia; and doubtless the authorities' wish to minimise, on grounds of cost, the different headdress worn in the Army, it is not unlikely that the new



Richard Hook's reconstructions show:

Plate I:

- (A) Highland Company, 25th (Edinburgh) Regt., c.1771, Minorca.
 (B) Light Company, 69th Regt., 1778.
 (C) Picquet Company, 11th Regt., c.1771, Minorca.
 (D) Picquet Company, 13th Regt., c.1771, Minorca.
 (E) Light Company, 6th Regt., 1778.
 (F) Light Company, 5th Regt., 1775, North America.
 (G) Light Company, 68th Regt., c.1775, West Indies.
 (H) Light Company, 62nd Regt., 1778, North America.

Plate II:

- (I) Light Company, 71st (Highland) Regt., 1791, India.
 (J) Light Company, Coldstream Guards, 1796.
 (K) Left Flank Company, 7th Royal Fusiliers, 1796, Canada.
 (L) Light Company, 52nd (Oxfordshire) or 72nd (Highland) Regts., 1791, India.
 (M) Light Company, 36th (Herefordshire) Regt., 1791, India.
 (N) Light Infantryman, 1791 (after H. Bunbury).
 (O) 90th (Perthshire Volunteers) Regt., 1795.
 (P) 5th (Rifle) Battalion, 60th (Royal American) Regt., 1798.

For detailed commentary and sources see body text.

Light Infantry cap was a version of the Tarleton helmet.

It was shown on a Light Company officer in a series of plates illustrating officers' methods of saluting in *The New Royal Encyclopaedia* published in 1790. It was certainly worn, with a green plume and turban, by the Light Companies of the 1st (Royal) and 32nd Regiments of Foot, at least towards the end of the century, according, respectively, to a portrait of Lieutenant John Ainslie by John Hayter and a drawing by Captain William Loftie. When the 90th (Perthshire Volunteers) Regiment was raised in 1794 it was clothed entirely as light infantry and with this helmet, which had a green feather and turban, and a large brass bugle-horn on the front above the peak (plate IIo). The 90th were still wearing this helmet in the Egyptian campaign of 1801, despite special light infantry



Light Company officer of the 87th Foot (disbanded 1783); his cap, though unclear, appears to be of the Tarleton type. (Army Museums Ogilby Trust)

caps having by then been abolished, as will be seen.

Whether or not the Tarleton helmet became the official cap for Light Companies, there is evidence that regiments displayed their usual indifference to regulations. In 1789 the 50th's Light Infantry caps were 'not according to regulations'. Two years later the 3rd Buffs' were 'very inconvenient for want of shade over the eyes — the whole tied on with string'. In the same year this also applied to the 30th's, while the 14th's, 31st's and 34th's were all noted as being too small and the 17th Light Company had 'plain hats'⁽¹⁴⁾. An example of lack of shade for the eyes appears in a watercolour by H. Bunbury of 1791 of a light infantryman of an unnamed regiment with blue facings (plate II*n*). Bunbury also shows what appears to be a 'chain-cap' still being worn as late as 1794 in an engraving titled *A Camp Scene*.

INDIA

Different styles prevailed in India, and three Light Company headdresses worn during the Third Mysore War (1790-92) appear in the engravings *Collection of Views in the Mysore Country* after Captain Alexander Allan of the Madras Army. Plate III, which seems to be no more than a cut-down hat, features in the print *Sawendroog*, the wearer being of the Light Company of either the 52nd (Oxfordshire) or the 72nd (Highland) Regiment, which were both present at the capture of that place in December 1791.

Allan's original watercolour for his *Nundydroog* (captured October 1791) shows more clearly than the engraving the Light Company caps of the 71st (Highland) Regiment — plate III — and the 36th (Herefordshire) Regiment — plate II*m*; the latter also features in Robert Home's painting *The Death of Colonel Moorhouse at Banga-*



lore in the National Army Museum. Both caps have a pale brown crest or comb, probably of feathers rather than fur, but whereas the 36th cap is on the lines of the Tarleton helmet, the 71st's is more in the earlier Light Dragoon style⁽¹⁵⁾. It may be noted, incidentally, that although both the 71st and 72nd were designated 'Highland', neither wore Highland clothing in India at this period.

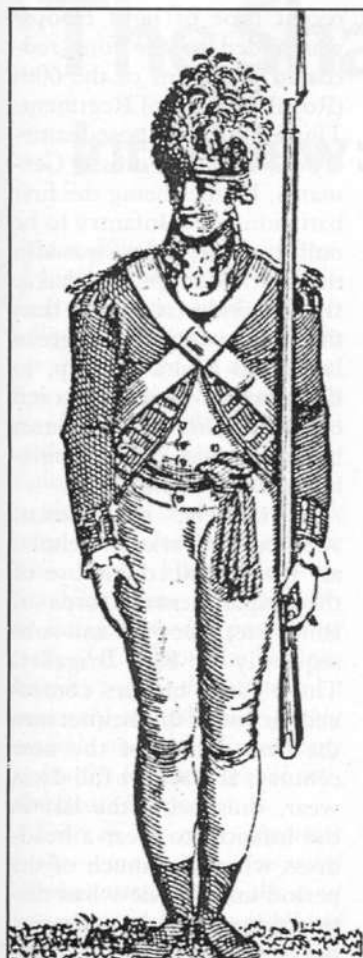
The commonest headdress in India in the last decade of the 18th century was the white or black 'round hat', similar to a top hat but with a broader brim. Captain Elers of the 12th (East Suffolk)

recorded that his Light Company in 1796 wore the black version, covered over the crown by a crest of black ostrich feathers and with an upright red and black feather at the left side.

The Royal Fusiliers Cap, 1790s

Between 1789 and 1799 the Colonel of the 7th Royal Fusiliers was HRH Prince Edward (later Duke of Kent), who had very definite ideas on his regiment's clothing. He instructed that, as Fusiliers, its flank companies were not to be known as Grenadiers and Light Infantry, but rather as Right Flank and Left Flank Companies. Extracts from orders he

issued in 1790, when the regiment was at Gibraltar, mention the Left Flank's 'helmet', with references to its blue serge turban being replaced by one of 'black, unvarnished leather in very small folds or pleats', ornamented at the back with a small leather bow with two white tassels, and enclosed by chains, a white feather at the left side, and the 'fur over the crest as black as can be got'⁽¹⁶⁾; all suggesting a Tarleton helmet. However, orders issued in Canada in 1798 refer to the Left Flank Company's 'black leather dress cap and hackle crest feather'⁽¹⁷⁾. A series of very detailed watercolours of the 7th's uniforms made between



Fusée Advanced



Fusée Trailed

1793 and 1796 by one of its officers, Lieutenant James Peachey, show this cap.

Its main part was not unlike plate III in shape, but with a peak added in front, and the transverse gap between the front and rear turned-up flaps filled with black bearskin; above the peak was a strip of white lace, terminating at the sides in two white worsted tufts, from the left of which rose the white hackle feather to curl over the black bearskin. On the front was a white metal scroll with the motto 'Nec Aspera Terrent', above an eight-pointed star bearing a white cross with 'VII' in the centre on a red ground within a garter inscribed 'Royal Fusiliers'. This cap was worn by all ranks tilted markedly to the right (plate IIk).

The transverse arrangement of the hackle feather, in contrast to the fore-and-aft crest of the Tarleton, was echoed in Light Company caps worn at the end of the century in the 31st and 34th



Left centre:

Light Company officer, 1790, in Tarleton helmet. From The New Royal Encyclopaedia.

Bottom:

Tarleton helmet minus its bearskin crest, worn by Lt.Col. Rowland Hill when commanding the 90th, which was clothed entirely as Light Infantry from 1794 to 1801. (National Army Museum)

Left:

Light Infantryman in 'chain-strap' as late as 1794. Detail from H. Bunbury's Camp Scene.





Light Company man of the 36th in India, 1791. Detail from R. Home's *Death of Colonel Moorhouse at Bangalore*. (National Army Museum)

Left Flank Company officer, 7th Royal Fusiliers, c.1795, by Lt. James Peachey; the badge and lace were gilt for officers. (Royal Fusiliers)

Regiments, according to drawings by Captain William Loftie. Both had peaks and an upright green feather at the left side; but whereas the 31st had a white fur or feather crest curling over the top of the cap from the base of the green plume, similar to the 7th's, the 34th had an upright white fur crest running from side to side, with the regimental number on the black, front above a white lace strip.

Foot Guards 'round hat', 1790s

The composite battalion of Foot Guards in America in 1776 had had a Light Company; but such companies were not a regular feature of Guards battalions until the outbreak of the French Revolutionary War in 1793, when four were authorised for the 1st Guards and two each for the Coldstream and 3rd Guards. An engraving published in 1793 and a plate from Edmund Scott's *Manual Exercise and Costumes* published in 1797 show the dress of these companies. Their headdress was a black round hat with the sides turned up and held in place by stays, and a black bearskin crest



from front to rear with a green feather at the left side curling over the crest; it was worn tilted to the right (plate II).

* * *

The concept of distinguishing Light Companies with a different headdress was, by the end of the century, coming to an end. By a General Order of 24 February

1800 all such caps and the hats of the Infantry, Guards and Line gave way to the so-called 'stove-pipe' shako. Henceforth the Light Companies would be distinguished only by a green feather or tuft.

The first move towards this change in fashion had occurred in 1797 when a battalion of Riflemen, the most

recent type of light troops, was added to the four red-coated battalions of the 60th (Royal American) Regiment. This 5/60th (composed entirely of foreigners, mostly Germans), besides being the first battalion in the Infantry to be uniformed in green, was also the first to adopt the shako: slightly wider at the top than the 1800 pattern, with a green lace band round the top, in the centre of which was a red cockade with a green tuft behind it, and a silver bugle-horn on the front⁽¹⁸⁾.

Its officers, in contrast, adopted the Tarleton helmet; as, from 1800, did those of the Experimental Corps of Riflemen (later 95th and subsequently the Rifle Brigade). These Rifles officers continued the use of this helmet into the first decade of the new century, at least for full dress wear, thus being the last in the Infantry to wear a headdress which for much of the period under review had distinguished Light troops, horse and foot⁽¹⁹⁾. **MI**

Notes:

- (1) In 1775. Quoted in David Gates, *The British Light Infantry Arm, 1790-1815* (1987) p.18.
- (2) 6 March 1771, WO 26/28, pp.377-8, quoted Hew Strachan, *British Military Uniforms, 1768-96* (1975), p.187.
- (3) Illustrated in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* (JSAHR), Vol.XXIX, p.87.
- (4) C.C.P. Lawson, *History of Uniforms of the British Army*, Vol.III (1961), p.72.
- (5) 3rd, 5th, 6th, 8th, 27th and 41st.
- (6) See also JSAHR, Vol.XXXII, pp.119-122.
- (7) See also JSAHR, Vol.XXXIV, p.80.
- (8) Quoted JSAHR, Vol.LIV, p.135 with illustration.
- (9) 12th, 39th, 56th and 58th.
- (10) Inspection Returns, 25 Sept. 1780 and 14 Sept. 1781, quoted Strachan, *op.cit.*, p.234.
- (11) See JSAHR, Vol. XXXVI, p.108.
- (12) Quoted in Adjutant-General's letter to Secretary-at-War, 7 March 1784, Strachan, p.192.
- (13) Adjutant-General to Secretary-at War, 5 July 1784, Strachan, p.194.
- (14) Various inspection returns for 1791, Strachan, pp.204, 210, 212, 221, 222, 224.
- (15) See also JSAHR, Vol.LXVIII, No.275 (Autumn, 1990).
- (16) JSAHR, Vol.XXVI, pp.17-18.
- (17) JSAHR, Vol.XXVII, p.121.
- (18) From Hamilton Smith drawings in Victoria & Albert Museum.
- (19) It continued until 1812 and by the Royal Horse Artillery until 1827.

'The Sharp End'

Interview: John Ellis

John Ellis, the Manchester-based author, is one of Britain's most respected younger military historians. His books are characterised by a combination of deep primary research; a vivid and accessible presentation of the results of painstaking statistical analysis; an attractive writing style; and a way with titles — we recall with pleasure *The Social History of the Machine Gun*. In recent years he has published a penetrating study of Cassino: *The Hollow Victory*; and, this summer, a massively-sourced but highly readable study of Allied strategy and tactics in World War II entitled *Brute Force*.

One of his most important books — in the view of respected commentators, one of the most important books ever published about World War II — is *The Sharp End*, a fascinating study of the actual physical and mental experience of the Allied front-line soldier in World War II, combining a mass of quoted description with a brilliantly organised explanation of that experience. Gen. Sir John Hackett calls it '... the best balanced, most sensitive, and best informed study of the condition of the fighting man in our time'; John Keegan praises it as '... an essential account of the experience of the unknown soldier'; and other glowing opinions come from such writers as Len Deighton and Anthony Price.

A revised and re-illustrated edition of this classic book is published this month by Windrow & Greene (see note at the end of this article); and we took the opportunity to interview the author for 'MI' readers.

MI: One of the great values of *The Sharp End* seems to us to be that it dispels — not so much 'myths', it's not a cheap de-bunking job in any sense — but perhaps 'lazy thinking'? It taught us a great deal we didn't know, even after 30 years' fairly voracious reading. When you started working on it, were there any

particular preconceptions that you held, that did not survive the process of researching and writing the book?

JE: In fact, *The Sharp End* arose directly out of me being forced to revise just the sort of assumptions you're talking about. While I was writing an earlier book, *Eye-Deep in Hell*, about day-to-day life on the Western Front in the First World War, I was intending to drop in quite a few comparisons with life at the front in the Second World War, showing how much easier the latter was. But as soon as I started investigating in any detail it became apparent that, at least for the fighting soldier, things were just as bloody awful as they'd always been. I sometimes think, in fact, that for the front-line soldier the whole history of 20th century warfare, including Vietnam, boils down to men fighting for their lives and their sanity in squalid holes in the ground.

Mind you, I still find it remarkable that I was perhaps the first historian to spell this out about the Second War, because dozens of those who'd actually taken part in it had made that quite clear in their memoirs years ago. But for some reason, maybe because the great mass of servicemen weren't actually at the front, these memoirs (like Wingfield's *The Only Way Out*, Lindsay's *So Few Got Through*, and Robson's *Letters From A Soldier*) never percolated into the public consciousness.

MI: Inevitably we have to talk in wild over-simplifications: but to use shorthand — to the amateur eye, one of the lessons of *Brute Force* seems to be that the supposed 'national characteristics' of at least some armies just don't stand up in practice. The British weren't pragmatic improvisers, they were often systematic, methodical, even plodding.

The Germans often 'threw the book away', and were imaginative, quick-thinking opportunists. Is there any seed of truth in generalisations like that?

JE: I think that those particular generalisations stand up fairly well. When you look at cock-ups like the pursuit after Alamein, the failure to seal the Falaise Gap, the armoured drive to Arnhem, the failure to close off the Scheldt beyond Antwerp, the failure to cut the Germans off after Cassino — you can't help but conclude that the Allies were at best rather ponderous... Similarly, one can't avoid admiration for German flexibility — the ability to 'think on their feet' tactically, as well as their amazing capacity to rebuild shattered cadres into effective divisions, or to weld the most disparate sub-units together into tough *ad hoc* battle-groups.

As to why this should be so — I just don't know. It's begging the question really, but it all comes down to the scope the Germans allowed for individual initiative. In any given situation the Allied command tended to either dig in, hold a conference, or panic. The Germans would immediately defer to one over-all organiser, who would immediately define broad tasks for the various units — and then simply expect them to get on with it as they saw fit.

Mind you, the Allies weren't complete duffers!... Logistically, for example, they were superb. Getting Patton across central France, for example, or the 3rd/5th US Fleet across the Central Pacific, were tremendous administrative feats.

MI: Can one draw any similar 'shorthand' assessments of the character of other major armies? The Japanese, or Russians? Or the French — we know you have looked closely at the Free French for your book on Cassino?

JE: Well, with a readership as knowledgeable as yours one's always in danger of teaching grandmothers to suck eggs; but I'd guess that the two major surprises for me concerned the Japanese and the French. Regarding the Japan-

ese, I'm afraid I had rather fallen for the 'banzai charge' stereotype, not realising that it was strictly a tactic of last resort. The essence of Japanese tactics were entrenchment and fortification. Moreover, on those occasions in 1942-43 when they were able to engage in mobile operations they proved themselves extremely subtle opponents, preferring the indirect approach wherever possible.

But the Free French are the real unsung heroes of World War II. In Italy, particularly, where they fielded four divisions — plus the dreaded *goums*! — under the command of General Juin, they played a crucial part in unhinging the Gustav Line (of which Monte Cassino was the lynchpin). Again, they relied on the indirect approach, and attacking into fearsome mountain terrain where the Germans were not expecting any attack. 1940, of course, was a national disaster, but against the Gustav Line the French — with a high proportion of African soldiers, — proved themselves as bold and as tactically self-reliant as the Germans — and that's on the Germans' own admission.

As for the Russians... Well, it strays a little from your point about pre-conceptions, but the one fact about Russia which has revealed the most to me is the actual scale of their contribution. When I was writing *Brute Force* I did a mathematical exercise — I divided the entire time spent in combat by the German Army and Waffen-SS into 'divisional combat months' — a unit representing one division in combat for one month. Of the total, the Eastern Front (in its broadest sense) occupied 7,800 months. The total for Africa, Italy, and North-West Europe is only 1,100.

MI: That's an astonishing comparison; no wonder Russian attitudes towards a re-unified Germany are so grudging.

On another subject — one of the fascinating glimpses you give in *The Sharp End* is the specific examination of 'combat fatigue' — its progress and symptoms.

The inference we drew was that, from a brutally practical command viewpoint, troops were at their most effective after just a few weeks in the line — long enough to get over the first shock, and learn their way around, but not long enough to start being too careful. From this it would seem that the clichéd 'battle-hardened, reliable veteran' is something of a contradiction?

JE: That's certainly arguable. The Americans reckoned that after roughly 250 days in the line an infantryman began cracking up. Of course, as like as not he wouldn't be in the line that long — casualty rates amongst US, British and Commonwealth rifle companies in North-West Europe between June 1944 and May 1945 were upwards of 70 per cent. But on your point about 'hardened veterans' — of course some blokes did survive for months on end; but one way they managed this, on their own admission, was by getting the raw replacements to do as much of the dirty work as possible.

MI: Just as we all have preconceptions about national stereotypes, I suppose we also have a mental picture of the soldier according to period. Do you think there was such a thing as a '1940s' type of soldier?

JE: Not really — except that he was physically much fitter than his predecessors. The capacity to endure of an American 18-year-old called up in 1944 must have been immeasurably greater than that of a European 40-year-old working class man called up in 1918.

MI: Reading your two books *Brute Force* and *The Sharp End*, which deal respectively with Allied strategy and tactics, and the soldier's personal experience of World War II, we notice a contradiction that seems to trouble other historians, too. On the one hand you recognise the greater aggressiveness and opportunism of some German units: you quote German opinions which are dismissive of the Allied tendency to go to ground and call in supporting arms when faced by resistance, rather than risking casualties by infantry exploitation. On the other hand,



your obvious sympathy with the soldier's ordeal suggests that you approve of a policy of using, as it were, steel instead of flesh whenever possible. How would you reconcile these two viewpoints?

JE: One doesn't castigate 'brute force' tactics simply because of some notional lack of 'military aesthetics' — but because they in fact prolonged campaigns. In North-West Europe we should have been over the Rhine and deep inside Germany by October 1944. But our only tactic was the ponderous set-piece attack, and we were totally unable to execute a proper pursuit or envelopment rather than just scurrying along in the enemy's wake. So the Germans evaded us and got just far enough ahead to buy the time to refit, and to turn and fight again. So our riflemen had another six months' dying to do. So in this campaign I see no contradiction — I think the reliance on massive firepower was in fact a false economy.

But in the Pacific, for example, in those dreadful assaults on fortified Japanese-held islands, I don't think that there was any alternative but

to try and laboriously blast and burn the defenders out, and the reliance on firepower is totally to be applauded. Not that it didn't cost a hell of a lot of dead infantrymen as well, of course.

MI: Reducing a statistical analysis of casualty rates to something the reader can actually grasp is one of the great strengths of *The Sharp End*, in our view. Your figures prove that for the man in the rifle company, it was just as dangerous to fight in 1944 as it had been in 1918, which is a sobering thought. In *Brute Force* you also cover naval and air operations. How do the casualty rates which emerge from your research compare with the land forces?

JE: I've never worked out any overall comparisons, but of course the obvious examples are the U-boat arm, and RAF Bomber Command. Losses among U-boat crews were between 70 and 80 per cent killed. In Bomber Command the figure is 47.5 per cent killed; and if you took the period September 1939 to mid-1944, you're probably talking about a fatality rate of upwards of 65 per cent. This compares with fatality rates

in infantry companies — in British, Commonwealth and American units in North-West Europe — of something around 17.5 per cent, but of course that's not for the whole war, that's less than a year. Individual units which fought in more than one major campaign had rates far higher than that.

MI: Can you tell us what you are working on next?

JE: Yes, the next book stems out of the enormous amount of background research I had to do for *Brute Force*. It will be called something like *World War II: A Military Database*, and it'll be an exhaustive statistical and tabular treatment of the nitty-gritty of World War II — you know, orders of battle, casualties, strengths, government/command structures, production figures, a list of every division that fought, details of the most important weapons, shipping and aircraft losses, etc. etc.

MI: It sounds like an unbelievably painstaking task; but we can't imagine any library, or seriously interested reader for that matter, who could afford to be without it.

Finally — we can all hope that the collapse of Communism and the opening up of the Eastern European nations to the West may lead to greater access for Western historians to previously closed archives. Is there any subject that attracts you in that direction, as a researcher?

JE: Not really. There are some good people working the Russian sources already, notably David Glantz, and I'm happy to leave it to them. Quite frankly, I think I've shot my bolt as far as military history is concerned, though what comes next I'm not sure.

MI: We find that hard to believe — and if true, shocking. We look forward to talking to you again about new projects when you've had some R&R. Thank you, and congratulations on *Brute Force* and *The Sharp End*. **MI**

John Ellis's *World War II: The Sharp End* is published in October by Windrow & Greene, 5 Gerrard St., London W1V 7LJ; approx. 424pp, 32pp new photographs, biblio, appendices, notes, index; ISBN 1-872004-56-3; £18.95

The Macedonian 'White Shields' Regiment 3rd-2nd Century BC

Dr. NICHOLAS SEKUNDA
Painting by ANGUS McBRIDE

The identification of 'uniform' clothing with specific units of ancient armies is a problematic field of research; but in recent years some progress has been made. In this article a leading authority on the armies of Alexander, and on the Hellenistic period — when armies led by Alexander's generals and successors were widely dispersed over the eastern Mediterranean world — discusses the evidence for reconstructing the appearance of a Macedonian regiment which enjoyed an élite reputation in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC.

The most reliable source of archaeological information concerning Hellenistic military uniforms are surely the painted tombstones of soldiers from various sites in the Hellenistic world, principally Alexandria. These are relatively straightforward to interpret. The cemeteries in which they stood can often be dated at least approximately, and many are inscribed with the name and ethnicity of the deceased, which enables identification with a particular regiment of mercenaries or conscripts.

The major problem in this line of study is that the immense cost of colour print-

ing (which is, after all, a relatively recent development) has precluded adequate publication of all but a handful of these monuments. Of more than a hundred tombstones which show the deceased in military dress, less than a dozen have been published in colour. The descriptions of the remainder are inevitably inadequate to ensure an accurate reconstruction, and the task of regimental identification becomes that much harder.

Another possible source of uniformological information is Pompeian art. Again the problem of the cost of colour reproduction has made only a

fraction of the material available for our study. Pompeii, under near-constant excavation since 1748, displays all the vices and shortcomings of archaeological research. Of around 700 houses so far excavated only six have ever been adequately published. Often the only record of an excavated wall-painting will be an antique line drawing accompanied by a totally inadequate description of the colours. It is estimated that some three-quarters of the original number of paintings are now lost. Archaeology as destruction of our cultural heritage is nowhere better illustrated than in the case of Pompeii. Nevertheless, there still remains a substantial amount of material to work with.

It has been suggested that many of the Pompeian frescoes copy Hellenistic paintings with some accuracy. It is the belief of the author that the Hellenistic originals of some of these paintings depict uniforms worn in the Hellenistic armies and courts. The purpose of this article is to examine one painting, copied in a Pompeian fresco, which, I believe, exhibits such features.

The fresco under discussion was found in 'The House of the Menander'. A group of three frescoes was found in a wing leading off the *atrium*, or central hall, all depicting scenes from the Trojan cycle. The first shows the judgement of Paris, the second the Trojan Horse being dragged inside the city, and the third a scene from the sack of Troy. It is this third fresco, dubbed 'The Night of Troy', with which we are concerned. On the right Ajax drags Cassandra away from the altar of Athena; in the centre the Trojan King Priam protests at the treatment of his daughter; while on the left the Spartan King Menelaus drags his wife Helen back to the Greek camp by her hair. In the left background an audience of helmeted Greeks and capped Trojans looks on.

THE ORIGINAL PAINTING

The figure of Ajax clearly depicts a Hellenistic peltast of the Macedonian *leukaspides* or 'White-Shields' regiment; thus the original painting would have been produced for the Macedonian court. The figure of King Menelaus presumably portrays the monarch who commissioned the original painting. He wears a helmet of a type common in the early 3rd century, ornamented with a pair of bull's horns. Alexander first appears horned, wearing the ram's horns of his father Zeus Ammon as a badge of his divinity. Two of Alexander's successors, Demetrius Poliorketes (who won con-

Painting of 'The Night of Troy' from 'The House of The Menander'. This painting copies a Hellenistic original which had perhaps been brought to Rome from Macedonia as loot. On the first day of Aemilius Paulus' Triumph in Rome some 250 waggons were needed to display all the booty taken, including statues and paintings which had mostly been pillaged from the Royal Palace at Pella, the Macedonian capital. (Photo: R.J.Ling)



Figure of King Menelaus of Sparta from 'The Sack of Troy'. Both the purple dress and the horned helmet worn by this figure are marks of royalty. Note also the ornate scabbard chape. (Photo: R.J.Ling)

Below:

South Italian gem sealing in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. The gem, which dates back to the 3rd century BC, shows two heroes being carried to safety by the attendants after having wounded each other in a duel. The bearded warrior, who has dropped his sword, carries a conventional hoplite shield, but his younger adversary is armed with a rather large two-handled peltè. It is tempting to connect the weaponry shown on this gem with that used by the Tarentine leukaspides, but this would go far beyond our evidence. Note the small cross-bar, or *arrèt*, below the spear head, designed to prevent it penetrating too far and sticking fast. The *arrèt* occurs frequently in South Italian representations of spears. (Photo: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford).



trol of Macedonia in 294) and Seleucus I of Syria, adopted bull's horns as their divine symbol. Demetrius held Macedonia only till 288 BC, when the country was partitioned by Pyrrhus of Epirus and Lysimachus of Thrace.

The rather ugly face of the monarch in our picture seems to belong to Antigonos Gonatas, Demetrius' son and successor. Antigonos recaptured Macedonia in 277, after defeating a band of Galatian invaders at the battle of Lysimacheia. He attributed his victory to the intervention of the god Pan, who threw the enemy into a 'panic', and adopted the goat's horns of Pan as his badge. No later kings used bull's horns. As Gonatas is still wearing bull's horns in the painting, the original painting probably dates to the period 294-288, when Gonatas was heir to the Macedonian throne. After 277 the Antigonid dynasty held Macedonia without further interruption down until the Roman conquest⁽¹⁾.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (20.1.2,4) mentions that a Tarentine regiment of *leukaspides* fought under Pyrrhus at the battle of Asculum in 279;

but it seems that the Tarentine regiment had only been founded by Pyrrhus in imitation of its much more famous Macedonian namesake, and had only an ephemeral existence. No other regiments of Hellenistic *leukaspides* are mentioned in the ancient sources.

THE HELLENISTIC PELTAST

Diodorus (16.3.2) tells us that Philip of Macedon created 'the Macedonian Phalanx' in 359. Philip was short of funds

and was faced with an imminent threat of invasion. The normal warrior of the period was the hoplite: a helmeted spearman carrying a large bronze shield three feet across. Helmets and shields were expensive, however, and we may presume that much military material had been lost in the destructive invasion of Macedonia the year before. Consequently Philip, unable to afford a phalanx of hoplites, created a phalanx of peltasts instead.

Peltasts were javelin-men

who were given a leather shield, much smaller than the hoplite shield, for protection. In the 370s the Athenian general Iphicrates and others had experimented with creating a battle-line out of these skirmish troops; Philip merely continued with the experiment. Polyaeus (*Strat.* 4.2.10), in a passage which describes the gruelling training programme to which Philip subjected his army during his first precarious year of rule, mentions infantry carrying pikes, helmets, greaves and *peltai*. At a later date, probably soon after Philip had secured the revenues of the Pangaion mines, his infantry were re-equipped as hoplites, and the Macedonian phalanx battalions continued to fight as hoplites well into the reign of Alexander.

From 330 onwards, however, we start to hear of lighter-equipped battalions of the phalanx. During the preparations for the Indian campaign (327/6) Alexander seems to have introduced much more thorough changes in infantry equipment, and the phalangite peltast is back. Alexander also orders a native phalanx of Asians to be raised, trained and equipped 'in the Macedonian fashion'. This phrase, it seems, is used to describe the equipment of the new peltast phalanx.

From this time onwards an increasing number of texts refer to troops 'equipped in the Macedonian fashion'. Actual examples of the new style of equipment, as well as representations of troops bearing this equipment or of the equipment itself, also start to appear in the archaeological record. The principle item of equipment, apart from the *sarisa* or pike, was the small shield called a *peltè*. Whereas the hoplite shield had measured up to three feet across, and had a wide off-set rim, the new *peltè*, though also of bronze, measured only two feet in diameter, and had only a narrow rim.

It is this type of shield which Asclepiodotus (*Tact.* 5.1) recommends for the pha-



⁽¹⁾ Late research suggests that the paintings in 'The House of Menander' copy a series of paintings by Theodoros, a court painter of Demetrius Poliorketes, depicting Trojan War scenes, mentioned by Pliny (*Natural History*, 35.40, 144).



Detail from 'The Sack of Troy' showing Ajax equipped as a Hellenistic peltast; possibly in the uniform of the Antigonid Leukaspides Regiment. The face might well preserve the likeness of some well-known Macedonian courtier, or could simply be a 'stock figure'. (Photo: R.J.Ling)

THE LEUKASPIDES REGIMENT AT PYDNA

The élite unit of the Antigonid peltasts was the *agema* or 'vanguard' of 3,000 men. This regiment may have been formed of the young men of Macedonia 'conscripted' into military service. There is little evidence for this conjecture, except that Plutarch (see below) describes the *agema* as 'the purest part of the Macedonians in youth'. The *agema* was unofficially termed the *leukaspides* or 'White-Shields'. Diodorus (31.8.10) tells us that the Triumph of Aemilius Paulus in Rome included some 1,200 waggon-loads of 'white and rough' shields, and 1,200 waggon-loads of bronze shields taken from Macedon. This would seem to indicate that the *leukaspides* used non-metallic shields; but it is probable that Diodorus has condensed his sources in transmission, and the first 1,200 waggons contained both white and rough shields. Probably both the *agema* and the peltasts of the line used bronze-faced *peltai*, but the *agema* painted their shields white to distinguish themselves as the élite unit.

The battle of Pydna, fought on 22 June 168 BC, marked the decisive defeat of Macedon by Rome. Scipio Nasica, a Roman officer who participated, composed one of the most important first-hand accounts of the campaign, which included a detailed description of the dress and equipment of the various regiments of the Antigonid army as they marched out of camp and formed up in the Macedonian battle-line. Only Plutarch offers us a tantalising fragment of this account, for the later sections of Polybius' *Histories* are not preserved, and, unfortunately, the four sheets of Livy which dealt


the phalanx: 'the best is the Macedonian, which is bronze, eight palms (ie. two feet) in diameter, and not too hollow'. The Greek in this passage is, unfortunately, not very precise. It could be held to imply that there are a number of types of Macedonian shield, of which one is bronze, two feet across and not too hollow; or that there is just one shield which is known as 'the Macedonian shield', which is of this type. At least, though, the passage makes it clear that *peltai* of this type were called Macedonian. A further reference to Macedonian *peltai* is contained in a fragmentary Athenian temple account for 306/5 B.C. [IGii²1487.95-97], probably recording the items of military equipment held in

the adjacent city arsenal, which mentions 'Macedonian *peltai* plated in bronze, [lined on the inside [with leather]']'.

Therefore the infantry phalanx of the Hellenistic monarchies came to consist of two basic elements; hoplites and peltasts. The Greek tactical manuscripts classify the peltasts as lying between the hoplites and the light infantry, as their equipment lay between the two. This basic division of the infantry of the phalanx into two elements is found in the army of the Antigonids, whose battle-line consisted of two main components: the phalanx of the *chalkaspides* — often termed simply 'the hoplites' or 'the phalanx' in our sources — and the phalanx of

the peltasts.

The *chalkaspides* were equipped with helmets, cuirasses and greaves, and carried a very convex bronze shield, heavily embossed in repoussé work and 70-80cm in diameter. This shield seems to have been a Macedonian equivalent of the hoplite shield, and may have been called *chalkaspis*. Modern authorities frequently term this 'the Macedonian shield', which is somewhat misleading, given the information from Asclepiodotus mentioned above. Our sources now seem to use the term 'equipped in the Macedonian fashion' quite indiscriminately to describe troops equipped in either 'chalkaspid' or 'peltast' equipment.



Dagger from the British Museum, probably from a looted Hellenistic tomb. Daggers of this type were used by peltast units in a number of Hellenistic armies, and it is probable that this weapon belonged to an officer of peltasts. The handle is ivory and the blade iron; the preserved length is 21.4cm, but the tip is missing. A fragment of the rectangular chape has also been preserved. (British Museum)

with the preliminary stages of the battle have gone missing too.

The Macedonian army was drawn up in a 'double phalanx'. Plutarch confines himself to reproducing Nasica's account of the front line. He (*Life of Aemilius Paulus* 18.3) first of all describes the Thracians, who are followed by the mercenaries and the Paionians, and then 'behind these, thirdly, the *agema* — picked men, the purest part of the Macedonians themselves in courage and youth, gleaming in gilded weapons and newly-made crimson tunics'. These in turn are followed by the *chalkaspides*.

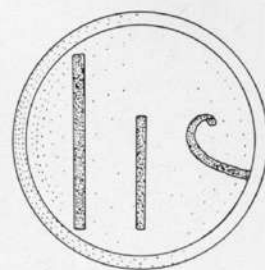
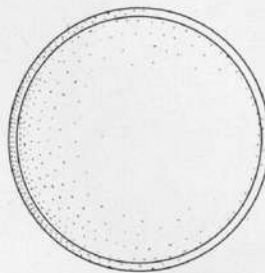
Livy (44.41.1-2), on the other hand, tells us that in the later stages of the battle the Roman general Aemilius Paulus managed to win a victory by placing his First Legion in between the peltasts in the second line, and the phalanx of the *chalkaspides* in the first. To Aemilius' right, he continues, Lucius Albinus led the Second Legion against the phalanx of the *leukaspides* which formed the centre of the Macedonian line. So, if we compare these two fragmentary accounts of the Macedonian line, it seems that Plutarch's *agema* of picked men is Livy's *leukaspides* phalanx, which formed part of the Macedonian front line. Beyond the *leukaspides* the Thracians and the mercenaries and Paionians would also have stood in the Macedonian front line, whilst the rest of the peltasts would have been stationed behind all these units, drawn up in a second line.

Plutarch (19.1) then tells us that as the attack began

Aemilius Paulus came up and found that the Macedonians in the first line had begun to place the points of their *sarisai* in the Roman shields; and that the other Macedonians — by which he must mean the peltasts in the second line — were taking their *peltai* down from their shoulders, levelling their *sarisai*, and then advancing with locked shields (*synaspismos*). So it seems that the *pelte* was carried on the shoulder on the march. Plutarch then (20.2) tells us that the Macedonians held their *sarisai* firmly in both hands, and that neither shield nor cuirass could resist the force of the *sarisai*.

At length the Macedonian line fell into disarray during its advance. Consequently the First Legion under Aemilius Paulus managed to insert itself between the *chalkaspides* and peltasts on the Macedonian right, attacked both these units, and broke the Macedonian line on this wing. Meanwhile the Thracians and the Paionians and mercenaries on the Macedonian left had already been put to flight by the Roman elephants and allies. Though the Macedonian cavalry had been left largely unscathed it was unable to support the phalanx of the *leukaspides* in the centre, which had been left isolated by the collapse of the Macedonian line to either side. The 3,000 picked troops remained in order and kept fighting (Plut. 21.3), but, cut to pieces in front, flank and rear, eventually they too were overwhelmed. In this manner, on a day when the history of Europe took a massive retrograde step, the *leukaspides* regiment disappeared for ever from the pages of history.

Plutarch (20.5), describing these final stages of the battle, tells us that the Macedonians



Diagrams showing both sides of the Hellenistic *pelte*, based on the painting from 'The House of the Menander'.

fought a hopeless struggle with their small *encheiridia* (daggers) and light *peltaria* (small *peltai*) against the large Roman shields and swords. Given that the daggers used by the peltasts proved to have such little success against the Roman swords, one is tempted to wonder why the Macedonians preferred daggers to swords. The principle reason was presumably that the sword could not be used in the close jam of the phalanx, whereas the dagger could. Normally, then, it would hold the advantage, unless, as happened at Pydna, the phalanx was attacked in flank or rear. The dagger was also, of course, cheaper.

We might now turn to examine the figure of Ajax in the painting from 'The House of the Menander'.

The tunic

The figure is depicted as a young man with a slight stubbly beard, barefoot and clad in a pinkish-red tunic of a crimson lustre (Munsell 6.25R 7/8) with a light blue border (Munsell 10B 8/5). The Greeks tended to des-

cribe colours by their tint rather than their shade. Thus the word *phoinix*, usually translated as 'crimson', can be used for any shade in a wide range of colours from what we would call purple to pink, so long as it had a bluish tint to it. So our rather pinkish tunic does not stand at variance with Plutarch: quite the opposite. Plutarch presumably describes these tunics as 'newly-made', because they had only been made comparatively recently before issue to the young conscripts serving in the regiment. The light blue border to the tunic is probably best understood as a distinction common to infantry units, as Alexander's infantry were distinguished by their blue helmets.

We show the *leukaspides* regiment hailing Pyrrhus as the new king of Macedonia, costumed and equipped according to the evidence discussed in the text. Pyrrhus himself wore a helmet distinguished by its tall crest and its goat's horns.



In the 4th century soldiers wore a short-sleeved tunic, called an *exomis*, which was let down from the right shoulder leaving the right arm, shoulder, and chest free for maximum mobility. Our peltast wears a Hellenistic type of tunic which is a further development in this trend. The tunic is now actually cut diagonally, removing the upper right portion of the tunic. The left sleeve has also been cut away, leaving only a shoulder-



strap, which even exposes part of the pectoral. The tunic is gathered at the waist by a belt over which it falls in a baggy fold. The light blue border would have been

sewn onto the bottom hem and onto the diagonal top edge of the tunic.

The dagger

At his left side he wears a dagger. The handle is shown in white, which presumably indicates that it is made of bone, as was the normal practice in the Hellenistic period. It should be noted that no baldric is shown, so presumably the dagger was worn on the waist-belt. The hilt has a pommel and a barrel-shaped grip which seem to be made

in one piece, and below these a white rectangle appears, which can be taken for the mouth of the sheath. Finally a small section of the sheath is shown, again in white. The fact that a dagger is shown is significant, and makes an identification between this figure and the *leukaspides* regiment more attractive.

The cap

On his head he wears a white felt cap shaped like a rather flat sugar-loaf. Originally these caps would have been worn under the helmet for comfort. A number of representations of peltasts show just a cap being worn, however, so perhaps it was standard practice to discard the helmet in the early Hellenistic period. Towards the end of the 3rd century the helmet may have been re-adopted. The 'Lindian Temple Chronicle', seemingly composed by one Timachidas, lists, among other things, dedications made to the temple of Athena at Lindos on Rhodes, where the inscription was found (Blinkenberg *Lindos, Fouilles de l'acropole 1902-14, II Inscriptions* (Berlin & Copenhagen 1941) nr.2, para.XLII). The inscription mentions a dedication made by Philip V of Macedon. Here helmets (*perikephalaia*) are mentioned alongside other peltast equipment.

The shield

We are extremely fortunate that the figure is depicted in such a way as to reveal the strap-fittings and the method in which the shield was held. The outer surface would have been plain, painted white, without a raised boss or any device. The shield has a narrow bronze rim. Following Nasica it would seem that the bronze shield-rims were gilded by the time of Pydna. The earlier painting depicts the regimental dress before this became the practice.

Three handles are attached to the back of the shield. The middle handle runs vertically along the middle of the shield, in the form of a brown leather strap about one inch across and eight inches long. It is attached eccentrically, running from just above the

centre of the shield to just above the bottom. This middle handle runs over the forearm just above the wrist. A second brown leather strap-handle runs vertically to the left of this first, crossing the forearm just below the elbow; it is partially obscured by Ajax's upper arm, but it seems to be somewhat longer than the middle handle. The peltasts at Pydna perhaps marched to battle with their *peltai* slung over their shoulders by means of this strap. To the right of the middle handle runs a third, also brown, running diagonally into the rim of the shield. It was this third handle by which the shield was actually held.

The pike

Ajax carries a short pike over his left shoulder which he holds with his left hand; the head is obscured by the figure of Cassandra, and the shaft seems to be only some six feet long. The third handle of the shield is held alongside the pikeshaft by the index finger of the left hand.

The short pike is a little surprising, as Plutarch makes it clear that the *leukaspides* and the other regiments of peltasts used the *sarisa*, and Polybius (18.29.2) tells us that the *sarisa* was normally 14 cubits long at that time. Aelian (*Tact.* 12), however, stipulates that the *sarisa* ought to be no shorter than eight cubits, which implies that *sarisai* of this length had once been in use. As Asclepiodotus (*Tact.* 1.2) tells us that the peltasts used a much shorter spear than the hoplites of the phalanx, it may be that the *sarisai* used by the peltasts measured only eight cubits. The spear in our painting is, however, only half this length. Whilst it is possible that the ancients cut down their pikes to 'half-pikes' for storming parties and the like, as did early modern European pikemen, the simplest explanation for the short pike carried by Ajax is artistic license: it would have been extremely difficult to depict a pike in its full length without disturbing the composition of the painting. [M]

Bottom:

Two of three associated terracotta plaques from an early 3rd century tomb in Canosa, Italy. These infantrymen are peltasts; separately modelled shields would originally have been attached. All three wear Italian 'Montefortino' type helmets, as known to have been used by some units of Pyrrhus' army during his Italian campaigns. The infantrymen could thus belong to the Tarentine leukaspides, or to another regiment of peltasts in Pyrrhus' army. (Photo: Louvre)

Helmet of 'Montefortino' type in the British Museum; another example has recently been found in Epirus, presumably brought there by one of Pyrrhus' soldiers. (Author's photo)



The First Contingent, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914 (2)

JACK L. SUMMERS
Painting by RON VOLSTAD

The first part of this article, in 'MF' No.26, described and illustrated the raising, order of battle, uniforms and equipment of the First Contingent (1st Canadian Division) before its move from Canada to Britain. This concluding part takes the Canadians into the Ypres Salient, spring 1915.

OVERSEAS

By the end of September 1914 the contingent was ready to move to England. The troops had received little real training. Most of their time was spent in organizing the newly-formed numbered battalions and in issuing uniforms, weapons, kit and equipment. The men had mastered enough drill to move more or less together, and had fired their Ross rifles in the general direction of the target. But, more importantly, they had begun to develop the cohesion and discipline which changes a group of people into an effective military formation. They had far to go before the battalions were fit for service, but the time had come to move one step closer to the scene of action.

Lt.Col. William Price, the creator of Camp Valcartier, was appointed Director-General of Embarkation and told to get the Contingent to England. The situation was chaotic. Price had no staff and no loading tables. Troops were separated from their horses and horses separated from their harness and wagons. Some ships were overloaded while others were only partly filled. But Price improvised a working organisation which somehow got the job done.

On 3 October, 32 transports sailed in convoy from Gaspé Basin with 35,000 soldiers on board, and dropped anchor in Plymouth Sound

on 14 October. The first of the thousands of Empire troops to land in England, the Canadians were given a wildly enthusiastic welcome to which they responded in equal measure. For the next several weeks a special train left Plymouth for Salisbury each morning to return those Canadians who had carried the celebration of their arrival beyond the officially prescribed limits.

SALISBURY PLAIN

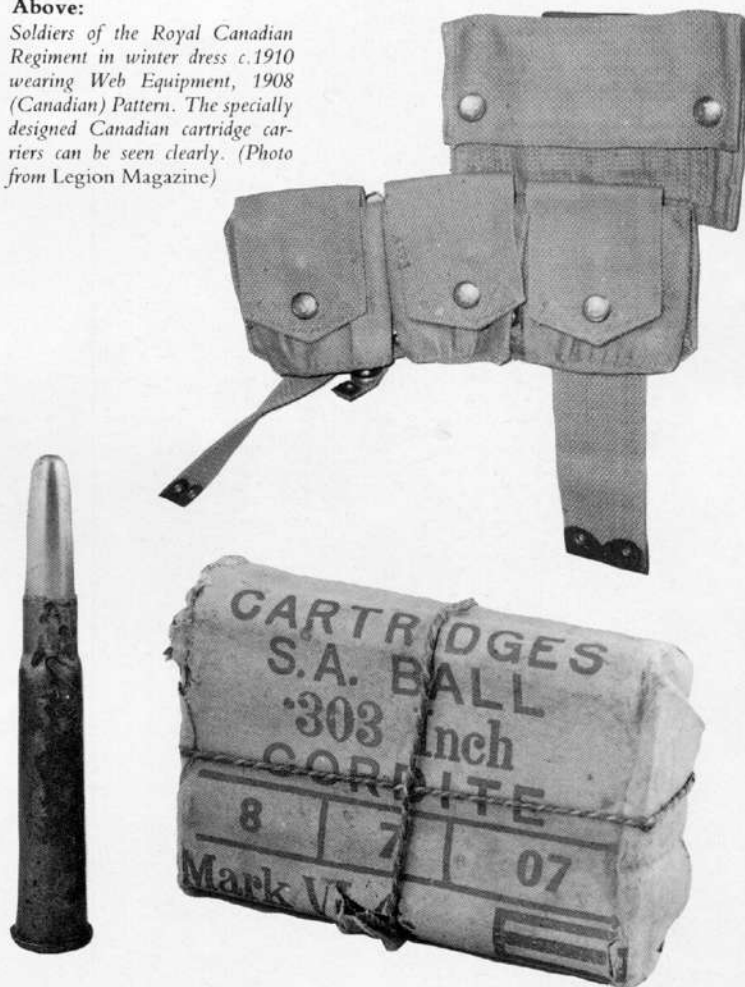
On hand to greet the Canadians in Plymouth was Lt.Col. E.A.H. Alderson, the recently appointed commander of the Canadian Division. A British regular officer with active service in Egypt and South Africa, his was the task of completing the organizing, equipping, and training of the Canadians, and of leading them into battle.

As they disembarked the troops were sent immediately to tented camps on Salisbury Plain; and even before the last trainload of Canadians reached the campsite, it started to rain. The most miserable Salisbury winter on record had begun. It rained for 89 of the next 123 days, dumping 24 inches of water — double the 32-year average rainfall — on the chalky plain. The training area became a vast sea of tenacious mud. Gale force winds levelled the tents, depriving the soldiers of their flimsy protection from the rain and bit-



Above:

Soldiers of the Royal Canadian Regiment in winter dress c.1910 wearing Web Equipment, 1908 (Canadian) Pattern. The specially designed Canadian cartridge carriers can be seen clearly. (Photo from Legion Magazine)



ing cold.⁽¹⁾

The First Canadian Contingent which arrived in England comprised an infantry division with a high proportion of first-line reinforcements, and several independent units and formations. The organisation of the 1st Canadian Division was not completed. The infantry,

Above:

(Above) The Canadian modified cartridge carrier for the Web Equipment, 1908 Pattern, with the large single pocket on the upper tier; and (below) ten-round paper packages of SA Ammunition, .303 Mark VI, which was carried in the pockets of the Canadian cartridge carriers. (Fred Hazell, Langley, BC; and Summers Collection)

continued on page 28



An artist's impression of a section of the Canadian position during the Second Battle of Ypres. A soldier of the 15th Battalion can be seen

(right) in his tam-o'-shanter and doublet with blue shoulder straps. While a wealth of detailed information is available from the items

which clutter the position, the general state of British trench construction of this period is of special interest. (From an original paint-

ing by Richard Jack, courtesy of the Canadian War Museum)





Above:

Canadian infantry in England, October 1914, wearing Oliver valise equipment, full marching order, with the small kit bag — carried high on the back in the cape brace — serving as an improvised knapsack. Cf. colour painting, Figure 2A.

Left:

Oliver valise equipment, light order, with braces attached to the waistbelt, and with cartridge pouch, haversack, and waterbottle Mark VI with carrier; October 1914. (Manitoba Archives, Foote Collection)

which had been formed into four brigades of four battalions each, was reduced to three brigades to conform to the organization of the standard British division. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Brigades were assigned to 1st Division while 4th Brigade was designated a reinforcement formation.

There were some changes to the basic organization of the infantry battalion. On mobilization the newly-formed Canadian battalions had been organized on the traditional eight-company

establishment. On arriving in England, after a period of confusion during which the War Office changed its orders six times, the Canadian battalions were converted to the four rifle company organization of the British regulars. And with the phasing out of the long-established eight company organization went the time-honoured appointment of the company colour sergeant, to be replaced by the equally imperious company sergeant major.

During reorganization of the Canadian Division several items of kit and equipment were replaced. The obsolete Oliver pattern equipment, worn by most of the Canadian infantry, was replaced with 1908 Pattern Web Equipment from British stores. The Canadian boots, subjected to repeated soaking on sodden Salisbury Plain and long marches on hard paved roads, simply disintegrated. They were replaced with the heavy hobnailed British ammunition boots. Canadian wagons and harness were not of approved



Above:

Troops of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in England, October 1914, wearing Web Equipment, 1913 Pattern. Visible in the photograph are the characteristic narrow braces, cartridge carriers, belt clasp, and entrenching tool carrier on the waterbottle carrier.

Left:

The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry in England, October 1914, with the famous camp colour — the Rig-a-Dam-Doo — which was designed by Princess Patricia and presented by her to the regiment in Ottawa. The soldiers wear Canadian pattern service dress and Web Equipment, 1913 Pattern, and carry the Ross rifle, Mk. III. The white-on-red regimental cloth shoulder titles are clearly visible.

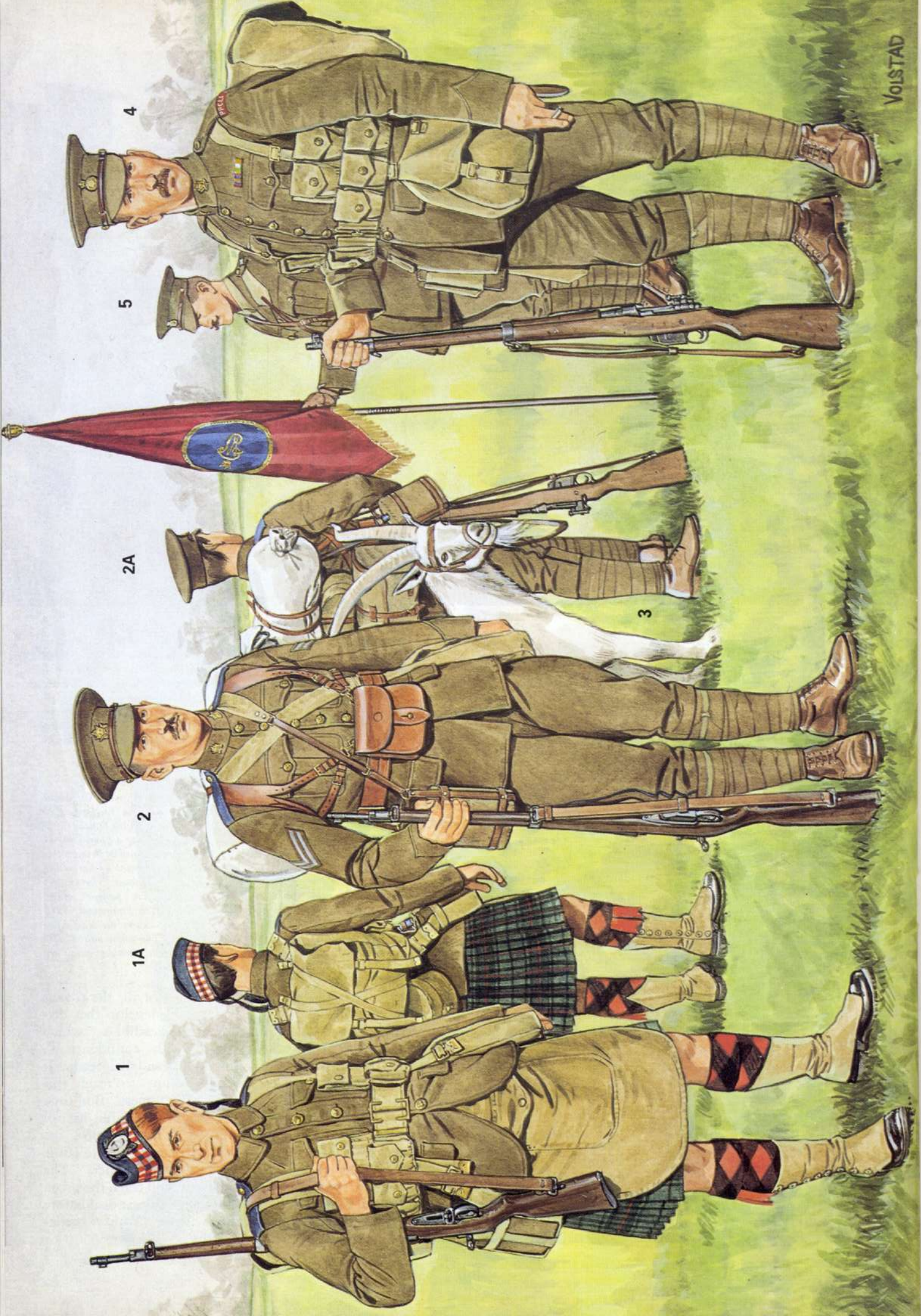


pattern, and were exchanged.

Sam Hughes was greatly disturbed by these changes in equipment and looked upon them as a personal affront. Thus, when the question of replacing the Ross rifle was raised, Hughes was adamant on its retention. It would take the unforgiving experience of battle and a total loss of confidence in the Ross by the troops to finally bring about its replacement.

The Canadians also had to complete their training before they were ready for service in France. Although hampered by the severe winter and a shortage of instructors, they got on with the drill, the never-ending route marches, and musketry practice as they strove to attain the British standard of 15 aimed shots per minute. They also were subjected to company, battalion, and brigade 'collective training'. But there was little in the training doctrine of the day which would prepare the inexperienced Canadians for the trench warfare which had settled over the Western

Front. Above all, the troops had yet to develop that disciplined steadiness which comes with confidence in themselves and their leader. It requires time to reach this state of readiness. But time was an unaffordable luxury and, as it always must, the final preparation had to come with active service. The enemy would teach the green Canadians a great deal before they were truly battle-worthy.



4

5

2A

3

2

1A

1

Ron Volstad's colour plate opposite illustrates various types of the 1st Contingent, CEF, UK, October 1914:

(1) Private, 15th Battalion (48th Highlanders of Canada) wearing Pattern 1908 Web Equipment, with the unique Canadian cartridge carriers; and a drab doublet of regimental pattern. He wears the cap badge of the 48th Highlanders of Canada but no collar badges — although many soldiers of the 15th did wear collar badges of the 48th Highlanders of Canada.

(1a) Rear view of a soldier of the 15th Battalion; the drab spats were replaced with full-length drab puttees before the battalion left for France.

(2) Corporal, 5th Battalion (Western Cavalry) wearing 'Oliver' Pattern Valise Equipment, Canadian pattern drab service dress jacket with blue shoulder straps, and drab cavalry breeches. The bronze maple leaf cap and collar badges were later replaced with regimental badges.

(2a) Rear view of a soldier of the 5th showing the arrangement of the valise and kit bag.

(3) 'Sergeant Bill' of the 5th (Western Cavalry), senior mascot of the Canadian Corps, was enrolled when a troop train bound for Valcartier stopped briefly at Broadview, Saskatchewan. Bill accompanied the battalion to France where he was promoted to sergeant. He was wounded at Ypres, but survived to return to Canada with his unit. On his death he was stuffed and mounted and placed in the Broadview Museum.

(4) Private, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry wearing Pattern 1913 Web Equipment and Canadian pattern drab service dress with regimental cap badge, bronze maple leaf collar badges, and red and white cloth shoulder titles. The Ross rifle Mk. III carried by this soldier was replaced with the British Short Magazine Lee-Enfield when the battalion was posted to the 80th Infantry Brigade of the British Army.

(5) Junior officer, PPCLI with the Regimental Camp Flag which was designed and embroidered by HRH Princess Patricia. Presented by Princess Patricia to the battalion before it left Canada, the Camp Flag was carried throughout the entire war. On 28 January 1919 the Flag was consecrated to become the first official Regimental Colour.

Right:

The Canadian Automobile Machine Gun Brigade, Ottawa, 1914. The armoured trucks carry two guns, at this time air-cooled Colts, and their crews. (National Archives of Canada)

Above:

The .303cal. air-cooled Colt machine gun, of which 50 were taken to France by the First Contingent due to a shortage of the Vickers MMG.

In late January 1915 inspections by Sir Herbert Kitchener and HM King George V indicated a major move for the Canadians. On 7 February the first units moved to the port of embarkation, and by 16 February the entire division was in France. In six months the Canadian Division had been mobilized, equipped, moved to England to complete its training, and, finally, moved into the theatre of operations. The British divisions which preceded them had all been regulars. The Canadians could indeed be satisfied with their initial response to Britain's request for assistance.⁽²⁾

EARLY OPERATIONS: YPRES

On arrival in France the Canadian Division was sent to the Armentiers sector for

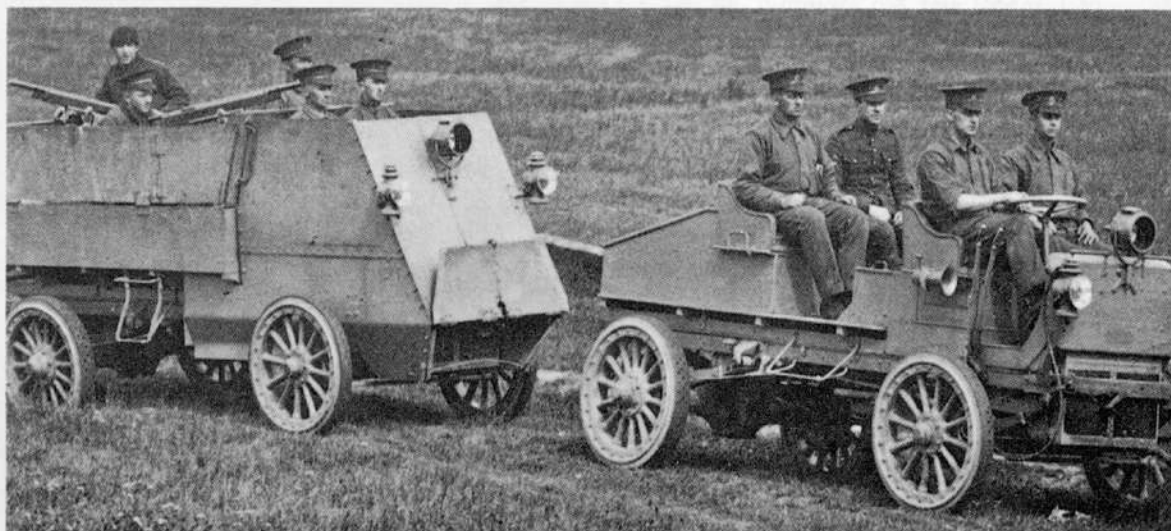
indoctrination in trench warfare. In late February the division took over 6,400 yards of front line trenches in front of Fleurbaix, from where it carried out diversionary activity to support the British attack on Neuve Chappelle on 10 March. In early April the Canadians were switched to the Cassel area, from where they moved to occupy 4,500 yards of front at the apex of the Ypres Salient. The 45th (Algerian) Division, the right hand formation of the French sector of the salient, was on the Canadians' immediate left.

Late in the afternoon of 22 April the Germans opened a fierce bombardment of the French lines on the Canadians' left, and followed it with the first gas attack in modern warfare. Two French divisions fled in terror, leav-

ing a four-mile gap in the perimeter of the salient through which poured German infantry heading for Ypres and the rear of the British defenders. Despite the heavy shelling and machine gun fire, and enemy infantry driving deep into the salient, the Canadians held their position and moved to seal off the open flank.

When night fell the Canadians were ordered to counter-attack the Kitchener's Wood position on their left flank. This was the first Canadian attack of the war. It was also the only counter-attack of the entire battle which was operationally sound. But, as one historian wrote, 'if the venture was sound militarily, the planning and execution were deplorable'. Two battalions, the 10th (Calgary) and 16th (Canadian Scottish), advanced in the darkness in column of companies, shoulder-to-shoulder — a formation best suited to the Crimean War — with no pre-arranged objectives except to close with the enemy and drive him from the woods.

The attackers were caught in a vicious crossfire, but pressed on to clear the enemy from the woods. Casualties were appalling: the 10th was down to a strength of 190, while the 16th was reduced to 260 all ranks. During the night and throughout 23 April a tenuous line was established along the left flank by the Canadians, and several British battalions were sent to their aid. The





The machine gun section of the Royal Canadian Regiment, Bermuda, 1915. Being regulars, the battalion were equipped with the Vickers machine gun while the newly-formed CEF battalions received the air-cooled Colts. The Canadian drab service dress, Web Equipment 1913 Pattern, and regimental cap, collar, and shoulder badges can be seen clearly in this illustration. (E.J. Anderson Collection)

French counter-attacks, promised by Foch to re-establish the original perimeter, did not materialize.

At 4 a.m. on the morning of 24 April the Germans launched a gas attack, followed by massed infantry, directly on the positions at the apex of the perimeter held by the 15th (48th Highlanders of Canada) and 8th (Winnipeg Rifles). Enveloped by the poisonous fumes, the Canadians stood firm and beat off the first two infantry attacks. Although forced to withdraw from their forward defences in the bitter and confused fighting which raged throughout the day, the Canadian battalions (with some welcome British assistance) maintained their position.

Although the battle would continue for another three

weeks, the crisis had passed. British and French reinforcements arrived and the shrunken salient was secured. The Canadian battalions, now greatly reduced in strength, were assigned to a defensive role and, on 4 May, were withdrawn to a rest area to be restored to effective strength. The Canadian gunners remained in the salient to support the British infantry.⁽³⁾

The Princess Patricia's

Shortly after the 1st Canadian

Division moved into the rest area the PPCLI, which had arrived in France with the British 27th Division, fought its first major action. On 8 May the Germans, in a belated attempt to destroy the defences of the salient, launched a powerful attack on the British position of Fresenberg Ridge where the Patricia's were posted. Although driven from their front-line trenches the Patricia's, now reduced to four

officers and 150 men and commanded by a lieutenant, held their ground. Fresenberg is now designated a regimental holy day, still observed by all battalions of the Patricia's.

The Canadians had fought their first major battle and, in spite of (or perhaps because of) their inexperience, had stood their ground in the face of violent artillery bombardment, powerful infantry assaults, and a direct gas



Canadian troops on Salisbury Plain, December 1914. The effects of the constant rain are quite evident.

attack — the first troops of the Empire to be subjected to this terrifying new weapon.

The stubborn defence of the left flank by the Canadians during the first two days of the battle saved one quarter of the British front-line troops in France from being cut off and destroyed in the Ypres Salient. The cost of this desperate gallantry was high, even by First World War standards. Of the 10,000 men in the Canadian rifle companies, more than 6,000 became casualties. But the 1st Canadian Division had earned the respect of its British and French comrades, and from this terrible introduction to the real war the Canadians emerged with a self-confidence and pride of identity which was to be maintained by the Canadian Corps for the next four years of the war.

MI

Notes:

(1) Because of the Canadian experience on Salisbury Plain the Australian and New Zealand contingents, on their way to England, were halted at Suez and sent to training camps in Egypt.

(2) In spite of problems with equipment, organization, and training, the 1st Canadian Division was assembled and moved to France in slightly less time than British planners estimated would be required to prepare the Territorials for active service. The first of the British Territorial divisions arrived in France on 24 February 1915 while Kitchener's new

divisions began to cross the Channel in the second week of May.

(3) Authoritative detailed accounts of the actions of 1st Canadian Division in the Second Battle of Ypres can be found in Col.G.W.L. Nicholson, *Canadian Expeditionary Force — 1914-1919*, and George Cassar, *Beyond Courage: The Canadians at the Second Battle of Ypres*.

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The Canadian soldier's impression of Salisbury Plain, January 1915.



'Private Marks of Distinction'

Individual Numbering of Weapons in a Company of Foot, 1815.

GRAHAM PRIEST

The precious, and perhaps unique surviving Company Roll notebook of a Coldstream sergeant at Waterloo allows us, for the first time, to examine with some confidence the practice of issuing individually numbered weapons to British soldiers of the Napoleonic period.

As the Officer is supposed to be informed, before his application to the Ordnance (sic), what number of firelocks and bayonets are designed for each Company, he should endeavour to get the number* of the Company and the firelock properly marked, on the several articles designed for each, that the confusion, which must attend the soldiers changing at any time with one another, may be totally avoided; and also, that the regiment may not be at the expense of it, which there is an absolute necessity for, should it not be otherwise done, in order to prevent the men from putting private marks of distinction upon the arms, and thereby damaging the appearance of the stocks.

*All arms delivered from the Tower of London are marked as desired; but those from Dublin Castle are not without paying for it.⁽¹⁾

So wrote Bennett Cuthbertson in 1768 in his *A System for the Compleat Interior Management and Oeconomy of a Battalion of Infantry*.

Seventy-six years later *The Queen's Regulations* were still addressing this problem: '12. The practice of punching, or even engraving letters or figures, on the Barrels of Muskets and on other Arms, is strictly forbidden. 13. Arms will be marked by the Ordnance Department, provided a proper description of the marks to be engraved thereon be forwarded by the Commanding Officers of Regiments or Depot Companies, with their application for the delivery of such Arms'.⁽²⁾

What happened in the intervening years? Until recently the only evidence concerning the markings placed on muskets and bayonets lay on the weapons themselves. With the passage of time, and the separation of complete stands of arms, the miscellaneous markings have been difficult to interpret with any accuracy. What did the numbers on the musket and bayonet mean? Were numbers always present to indicate a particular company?

THE BIDDLE ROLLS

Just recently, documentary evidence about some of these markings came to light dating from the eve of the battle of Waterloo⁽³⁾. Sergeant John Biddle of the Light Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Foot Guards (The Coldstream) kept his Company Roll for 18 June 1815, containing details of each man and the equipment for which he was responsible. As Biddle was given the task of completing the list of killed and wounded of the 2nd Foot Guards after Waterloo, the Company Roll notebook in which Biddle kept details of his own men, and the actual casualty list (written on the back of a laundry bill) are particularly important.

The notebook contains the names of 126 members of Biddle's company, comprising seven sergeants, seven corporals, two drummers, one pioneer and 109 privates. Of the Other Ranks two names are crossed out with the notations 'Sick', and 'Transfired to the 2 Company 10 May 1815'. A typical page



'The heroic defence of Hougomont by the Light Companies of Wellington's army on June 18th 1815' by Richard Catton Woodville. The men mentioned in the Biddle papers were present at this action. The Roll Call: Biographical Notes and Anecdotes by Charles Dalton mentions that 'Sergt. John Graham, Light Company, 2nd Batt. Coldstream Guards' was noted for his bravery in assisting Lt. Col. Macdonell (detached from the 1st Company as Acting 1st Major) and Sgt. Maj. Ralph Fraser of the 3rd Foot Guards to close the courtyard gate in the face of a strong French attack. He also rescued his brother from a burning building during the fight. In August 1815 Sgt. Graham was selected (together with Lt. Col. Macdonell) by Wellington for the pension granted by the Rev. Norcross, Rector of Framlingham, to be given to 'the most deserving soldier at Waterloo'.

Dalton made a clerical error, as the brave soldier was Corporal James Graham. The roll seems to indicate that James Graham was promoted to sergeant before the pension was granted; and Philip Haythornthwaite has confirmed via the Waterloo roll for 2/2nd Foot Guards (WO 100/14) that his Christian name was James. The Biddle list notes that a Joseph Graham was 'wounded — Ded': this must have been James's brother. (Wallis & Wallis)

records the names of between seven and 11 individuals. The details have been entered on a five-column grid orientated

Table A

Names	Firelocks	Bayonets	Great coats	Remarks
Tarling Thos.	1013	1013	107	Wounded
Taylor Jno.	77	77	520	
Talferey Benjn.	55	55	1717	Wounded
Thomas Corns.	39	39	1819	Killd.
Tarrant Jno.	8	706	1429	Wounded
Thompson James	85	85	1365	Wounded
Tyson Josh.	1210	1279	1212	Wounded
Valentine Jno.	43	43	1041	

so that the central fold of the notebook has to be rotated into the horizontal plane for reading purposes. A typical page is reproduced as Table A.

Sergeant Biddle has kept details of each man's rank, surname, forename, firelock, bayonet and greatcoat number, with additional 'Remarks' concerning injuries received during the battle of Waterloo, date of promotion to sergeant or corporal, or other service information.

For the first time it is therefore possible to say that a named individual was issued with a particular numbered musket, bayonet (and great-

coat) on 18 June 1815. It is also possible to compare the numbers of the weapons and equipment throughout the entire company. At first sight Biddle's list, arranged by rank and then alphabetically, provides a totally confusing picture of issue numbers. Figures ranging from 1 to 1740 occur in the musket and bayonet lists, and from 13 to 9214 in the greatcoat record. Only one individual, William Cooper (who died of wounds), had a uniform set of serial numbers — 54 — placed on musket, bayonet and greatcoat.

Closer examination shows that although all individuals

(except John Moore) had a greatcoat, nine men were not issued with a numbered musket and bayonet; Sgt. Biddle had a musket but no numbered bayonet; and Francis Freeman had a bayonet, but lacked a numbered firelock.

Of the 115 fully armed soldiers, 94 had a firelock and a bayonet with paired numbers; 88 of these fell within the number range 1 to 121, and six between 1013 and 1740. A further 21 individuals had muskets and bayonets with mismatched numbers ranging from 1 to 1740. More curious was the fact that 11 pairs of soldiers had weapons marked with identical matched serial numbers; and that one pair had identical mismatched muskets and bayonets.

To interpret the roll more easily I have re-arranged Sgt. Biddle's list into an ordinal sequence commencing with firelock and bayonet No.1 (see Table B). 'Greatcoats' and 'Remarks' columns have been omitted, as they are not pertinent to our subject.

The re-arranged list suggests that originally Sgt. Biddle's company was issued with firelocks and bayonets in



matched pairs of serial numbers commencing at 1/1 and possibly reaching 121/121. As members of the company lost, wore out or damaged weapons they were replaced with the survivors of the pairs until these were exhausted. Thus musket and bayonet pairs with the following numbers are missing entirely: 5, 13, 29, 33, 37, 41, 46, 48, 59, 65, 71, 75, 79, 81, 84, 87, 92, 93, 102, 103, 104, 108, 110, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117 and 118. Of these 29 missing pairs it is thought likely that 13, and possibly 113 might have been omitted for superstitious reasons — although greatcoat 13 does appear. From the remaining 27 weapons there is a noticeable increase in gaps after the matched pair of bayonet and musket numbered 100.

Within the 1 to 121 sequence nine muskets have their matched bayonet missing: 8, 15, 31, 44, 66, 82, 101, 106 and 107. A further six bayonets exist within the

Marks on an India Pattern 'Brown Bess' which recently fetched £1,450 in auction, the regimental marks probably being a major factor in this very high price. The brass butt-strap bears '186' over 'RF' (for Royal Fusiliers, 7th Regt. of Foot) over 'C' over '7'. The musket still has its associated ramrod, marked on one side '186' and '7'; and on the other with the same 'C' as the butt-strap, with a noticeable upper serif. The bayonet now associated with this musket is marked '319' on the flat of the blade, and 'G7' (not 'C7') on the socket. (Photographs Tom Reeves, courtesy Wallis & Wallis)

same number range without an identically numbered musket: 89, 97, 105, 111, 120 and 121. If either the musket or bayonet from the original number sequence remained serviceable it would seem that it was re-issued in a mismatched pair. Richard McClaran therefore carried

Table B: Sergeant Biddle's Company Roll for 18 June 1815

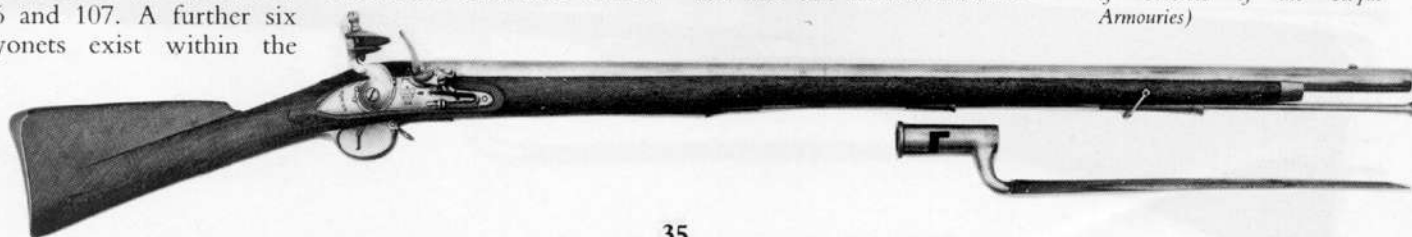
Name	Firelock	Bayonet	Name	Firelock	Bayonet
Jones Isaac	1	1	Cpl. Graham Jas.	64	64
Serjt. Lloyd Thos.	1	1	Wright Jn.	66	83
Bell Jn.	2	2	Davis Dd.	67	67
Serjt. Miller David	2 Comp	111/2	Bilby Wm.	39'67	67
Cpl. Staley Ralph	3	3	Grimshaw Jn.	68	68
Allen Thos.	4	4	Belcher Richd.	69	69
Miles Nath.	6	6	Cooke Sam.	69	69
Cpl. Graham Jos.	7	7	Davison Jn.	70	70
Tarrant Jno.	8	706	White Josh.	70	70
Sheldon Jn.	9	9	Withers Jos.	72	72
Wild Thos.	9	9	Brown Hy.	73	73
Bailes Geo.	10	10	Billingham Jos.	74	74
Williams Edwd.	11	11	Haddock Robt.	76	76
Muirhead Leo.	12	12	Taylor Jno.	77	77
Denning Wm.	12	1	Webster Jn.	78	78
Stephens Wm.	14	14	Mann Edward	80	80
Mc Claran Richd.	15	120	Griffiths Evan	80	89
Smart Jas.	16	16	Serjt. Moore Jn.	82	74
Worman Jos.	16	16	Smith Peter	82	74
Smith Thos.	17	17	Cpl. Henderson Thos.	82	82
Cpl. Robinson Jas.	18	18	Campbe Dd.	83	83
Wilkinson Geo.	19	19	Mason Moses	85	85
Shannon Richd.	20	20	Thompson James	85	85
Cotton Rich.	21	21	Neale Rueben	86	86
Woolhams(?) Wm.	22	22	Gibbs Job	88	83
Cooke Jos.	23	23	Stainer Wm.	88	88
Burton Thos.	24	24	Atkins Edw.	90	90
Laplain Wm.	25	25	Kite Jas.	90	90
Wilkins Rob.	26	26	Butterworth Jas.	91	91
Donoughy Ptk.	27	27	Machin Jos.	94	94
Herbet Wm.	27	27	Serjt. Beale Richd.	95	95
Wild Geo.	28	28	Walker Edwd.	96	96
Summerland Benj.	30	30	Langley Benj.	98	34
Haile John	31	83	Peace Geo.	98	98
Brislin Edw.	32	32	Griffiths Jn.	99	99
Shenson Joseph	32	32	Wright Bagnal	100	100
Lloyd Jno.	34	34	Anning Hy.	101	45
Robinson Jas.	35	35	Rea Thos.	106	105
Hodson Hy.	36	36	Jones Robert	107	97
Studman Jno.	38	38	Cpl. Robinson Jos.	109	109
Thomas Corns.	39	39	Griffiths Richd.	115	115
Bell John	40	594	Mansfield George	119	119
Serjt. Seaberry Rich.	40	40	Freeman Francis	-	121
Cpl. Jones Wm.	42	42	Tarling Thos.	1013	1013
Serjt. Biddle Jn.	No.42 Comp.		Hill Wm. Sick	1155	1165
Edwards Wm.	43	43	Tyson Josh.	1210	1279
Valentine Jno.	43	43	Motherly Robt.	1212B	1212B
Robinson Thos.	44	74	Alexander Jn.	1242	1242
Whitney Geo.	47	47	Cotterill Geo.	1335/B	1325
Halblaster Chas.	48	48	Williams Saml.	1527	1527
Wilby Saml.	49	49	Bowden Philip	1584	1584
Dibble Luke	50	50	Lishman Wm.	1740	1740
McCrae Alex.	51	51	Dr. Hinchley Geo.	Horn	
Cygrove Jn.	52	52		No.1	-
Richards John	53	53	Dr. Faramy(?) Jno.	Horn	
Cooper Wm.	54	54		No.2	-
Talferey Benjn.	55	55	Jones Thos. Pioneer	-	-
Bagent Jos.	56	56	Fletcher Wm.	-	-
West Jas.	57	57	George Saml.	-	-
Frost Jno.	60	60	Morgan Dd.	-	-
Coniber Thos.	61	61	Serjt. Wooton Josh.	-	-
George Thos.	61	61	Laycock Jas.	-	-
Fuller Thos.	62	62	Transfired to the 2 Company 10 May 1815.		
Burrows Martin	63	63	John Weller		
Beckley Jn.	63	97	Received from 2 Compy.		

firelock 15 but bayonet 120; Henry Anning had musket 101 and bayonet 45; and so forth.

Some difficulty is encountered in providing an explanation for the muskets and bayonets with duplicated serial numbers. Eleven matched sets and one mismatched set

are repeated: 1, 9, 16, 27, 32, 43, 61, 69, 70, 85, 90 and 82/74. Six muskets without a similarly numbered bayonet are present: 12, 40, 63, 80, 88 and 98. Bayonet number 1 is

India Pattern musket with bayonet, c.1800. This example has a swan-necked cock. (Courtesy the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries)





Above

A later 'Brown Bess' displaying another type of marking: an India Pattern, dated 1838, with '42 REG' marked on the barrel. (Courtesy The Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland)

recorded three times; and bayonets numbered 74 and 83 are written down four times.

DEAD MEN'S WEAPONS?

If Sgt. Biddle was writing details in his notebook within hours of the close of the battle of Waterloo there are many ways for errors to have crept in. The Light Company, 2/2nd Foot Guards was in action at Hougoumont from approximately 11.30 a.m. until 8.00 p.m. on 18 June. The soldiers were so exhausted that they bivouacked near the burnt-out remains of the château on the night of the battle. Biddle himself had been wounded, although he was fit enough to be delegated the task of identifying the dead and wounded of the entire battalion. Several men may not have returned to their company, either because they were prisoners — like Dmr. George Hinchley and Pte. John Alex-

ander — or because they lay dead or wounded on the battlefield.

Perhaps some of the returning soldiers had equipment salvaged from the dead or wounded? Sgt. Thomas Lloyd may have recovered Isaac Jones' musket and bayonet 1/1 after the latter's death during the battle. Sgt. John Moore, similarly, may have used Peter Smith's weapons 82/74 when Smith was wounded. However, this theory does not hold for weapons 9/9, 27/27, 32/32, 43/43, 61/61, 70/70, and 90/90. If each man was held responsible enough for his equipment to pay for a replacement in the event of a loss then it seems unlikely that Sgt. Biddle would be so inaccurate in his notebook. One can imagine the argument that would ensue if a soldier were accused of losing weapons that had never actually been issued to him. Other evidence from the company roll would seem to indicate that Sgt. Biddle was meticulous in his record-keeping.

Several muskets and bayonets seem to have been issued with much higher numbers than the number of men in

the company would necessitate. Bayonets 594 and 706 appear to be mismatched well out of sequence. Muskets and bayonets with matched serial numbers 1013, 1242, 1527, 1584 and 1740 were probably drawn from a regimental reserve when the supply of low-numbered weapons was insufficient for the men in the company. Even here some mismatched firelocks seem to have been used: 1155 and 1165, 1210 and 1279 and 1335/B and 1325.

A number of weapons bore very individual markings:

Name	Firelocks & Bayonets	
Serjt. Miller David	2d Comp.	111/2
Serjt. Biddle Jn.	No. 42 Comp.	-
Bilby Wm.	39/67	67
Motherly Robt.	1212 B	1212B
Cotterhill Geo.	1335/B	1325.

It is not certain that Sgts. Miller and Biddle carried ordinary muskets. Although the decision was not finalised until July 1830, many Fusilier regiments had been allowed to issue fusils in lieu of polearms from as early as 1770. All Light Infantry sergeants carried fusils and bayonets, instead of pikes, after 1813⁽⁴⁾. The New Land

Pattern Light Infantry Musket does not seem to have been used by the Coldstream, so the precise fusil is unknown. The weapons used may have had unique markings as they did not fall into the regular system of supply and listing of other weapons.

Judging from the recorded markings William Bilby's musket may well have been acquired from the 39th Foot in the latter stages of the Peninsular War, where their 1st Battalion was engaged in much action. Robert Motherly and George Cotterhill seem to have been given muskets of a later batch, perhaps taken from some kind of reserve supply. The theory that firelocks may previously have been issued to a 'B' Company, judging from the extra letter marking, founders on the fact that companies were numbered, not lettered. This raises the question about the numbering of the Light Company within the Coldstream Guards.

Biddle's papers refer to his unit as 'Lieut. Col. Walpole's Company' rather than 'the Light Company'. (Walpole was not the actual com-

Below:

New Land Pattern musket with bayonet, c.1805; this example has the later ring-necked cock.



42 REG

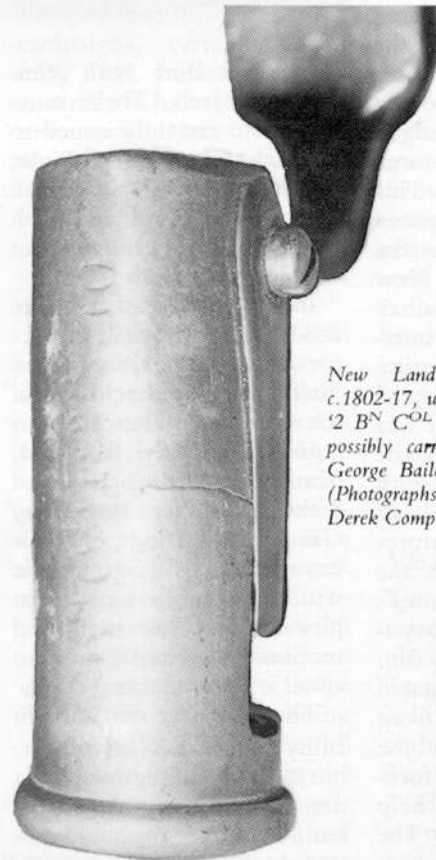
Below:

India Pattern bayonet, c.1800, with a typical socket mark — '6th Co., No.24'. (Author's Collection, photographs Martin Brayley)



mander at Waterloo; this distinction was carried by Capt. the Hon. Robert Moore, during the absence of Senior Capt. William Walton who was acting Adjutant.)

At Waterloo the regiment consisted of ten companies, including the two flank companies of Grenadiers and Light Infantry. The companies were numbered from one to eight but the Grenadier and Light companies were un-numbered. The Grenadier Company seems to have been placed before the others, when the units were listed in 1833, with the Light Company being noted as the last company of the battalion⁽⁵⁾. James Laycock and John Weller were transferred to and from the 2nd Company before the battle. The fact that the firelocks and bayonets are numbered from '1' onwards may indicate that the Light Company was the



New Land Pattern bayonet, c.1802-17, with marks on socket: '2 BN COL GDS 10', and thus possibly carried at Waterloo by George Bailes — see Table B. (Photographs Martin Brayley, Derek Complin)



Early socket 'fraction' mark found on Land and India Pattern bayonets, presumably translating as '4th Company, weapon number 50'. (Author's Collection, photograph Martin Brayley)

Below

India Pattern bayonet socket marked 'G1' over '392'—possibly translating as '1st Guards'? (Brayley Collection)

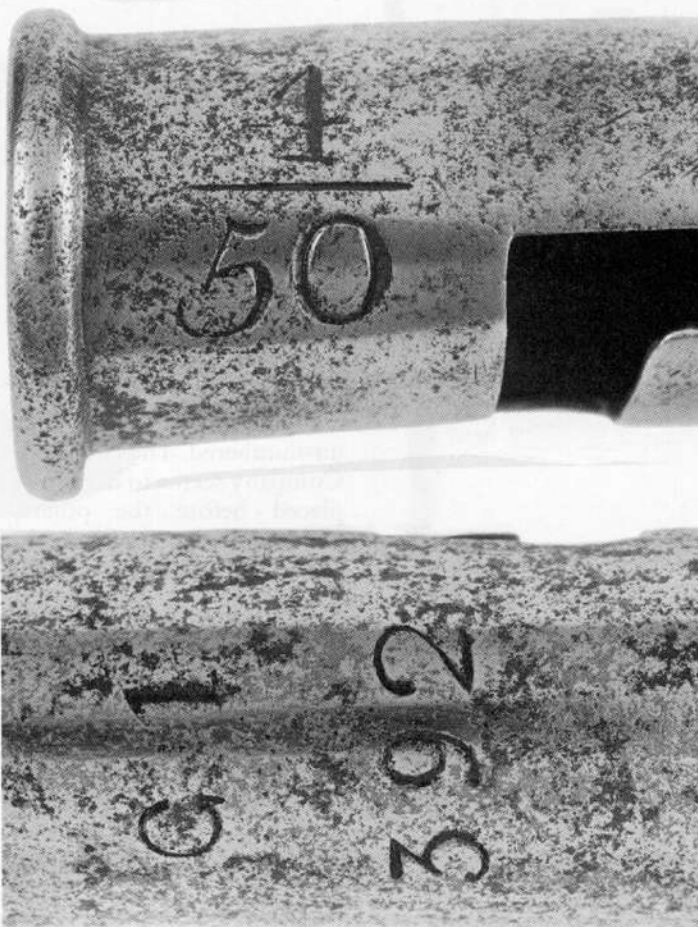
first company to be issued with its firelocks from the regimental supply. Other regiments used different numbering. The Light Company of the 1st Battalion, 1st Foot Guards was numbered '8' during 1814-15.

MARKING OF WEAPONS

The term 'firelock' does not help identify the actual musket which was used by Biddle's men at Waterloo. A bayonet held by Derek Complin in Canada may answer this query.

A New Land Pattern socket bayonet bearing the legend '2 B^N C^{OL} G^{DS} 10' on the socket would seem to be a good contender for the edged weapon issued to George Bailes at Waterloo. This bayonet was either mated with a New Land Pattern Infantry Musket or a New Land Pattern Light Infantry Musket⁽⁶⁾. The infantry musket was constructed during the brief period following the Peace of Amiens in 1802; it was a simplified version of the Land Pattern flintlock with 42in. (106.6cm) barrel of .75in. calibre. Many features had been influenced by the earlier Duke of Richmond's Musket, including the bayonet. This had a short 3in. socket with an elongated spring screw-bolted in front of the mortise slot⁽⁷⁾; the spring engaged with the foresight of the musket to help secure the bayonet. The bayonet blade was streamlined near the junction with the shank to give a smoother appearance and increased strength.

The same bayonet was carried by the Light Infantry Musket ordered on 28 October 1811⁽⁸⁾. Twenty thousand of these were made



in musket bore with 39in. (99cm) barrels. These muskets were certainly issued to the Light Company of the 1st Battalion, King's German Legion, the 52nd and 90th Regiments, but probably not the Coldstream.

In a letter dated 17 June 1844 George Lovell, Inspector of Small Arms, confirmed 'that up to the conclusion of the war with France, eight regiments viz: the 4th, 43rd, 52nd, 60th, 68th, 71st and 85th besides the Brigade of Guards had springs on their bayonets . . .' ⁽⁹⁾ Sgt. Biddle would probably have been pleased that his men had received the most modern small arms available.

The identity of William Bilby's musket is less certain, but as the 39th Regiment was not issued with the New Land Pattern he probably carried the India Pattern version with 'Brown Bess' style socket bayonet. As modern ideas of uniformity had not developed in the early 19th century, such an arrangement was quite acceptable as long as the musket took the same ammunition. The India Pattern Musket was a shortened

version of the Land Pattern and was originally designed for the forces of the East India Company. Weapon shortages during the French Revolutionary War (1793-1801) caused the adoption of the India Pattern by Government forces in 1797. The firelock had a 39in. barrel of .75in. calibre. It carried the traditional triangular-bladed socket bayonet attached to the foresight of the musket by a zig-zag mortise. The socket was 4in. and the blade 17in. long.

Both muskets and bayonets were given identification markings, but most carried 'fractions' which identified a particular company (or rack) and an individual weapon. The regimental number was not applied to the combination so often, but does appear. As both 39 and 67 are higher figures than the necessary 'ten' required when counting companies, one of these probably refers to a regimental number. Thus William Bilby may have carried weapon 67 from the 39th Regiment.

John Biddle's astute preservation of the Company Roll, originally compiled in April

or May 1815, with its historic additions appended on 18 June (before his temporary evacuation to Haslar Hospital), has answered many historical questions. It has also created a few problems for future exploration. We should be grateful to him for leaving the window to the past slightly ajar. MI

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Notes:

- (1) Cuthbertson, B., p.107
- (2) Queen's Regulations, 1844, p.93
- (3) Haythornthwaite, P.J., 'A Tale of Two Guardsmen', *Military Illustrated*, No. 14, August/September 1988, pp.28-32
- (4) Barthorp, M., p.61
- (5) Mackinnon, Col. D., p.220
- (6) Blackmore, H.L., pp.136-138
- (7) Priest, G., p.32
- (8) Blackmore, H.L., op cit., p.138
- (9) Watts, J. & White, P., p.288
- (10) Barthorp, M., p.60
- (11) Dalton, C., p.270

Acknowledgements:

Grateful thanks to Philip Haythornthwaite for his unstinting help; to Alan Harrison for permission to use the Biddle papers; to Capt.D.D. Horn, The Guards Museum, and Maj.(QM) C.J. Louch, Regimental HQ, Coldstream Guards for their assistance; and to Derek Complin, Allan Carswell, Maj.W.H.White, The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry Regimental Museum, J.R. Norris, Wallis & Wallis Auction Galleries, and Martin Brayley for the use of photographs.

The British 1942 Battle Jerkin (2)



IAN SADLER

The first part of this article ('MI' No.27) described and illustrated the Battle Jerkin in detail; this concluding part describes its use in action, and the skeleton assault jerkin or 'Bren pouch' vest developed from it.

The first major trials to ascertain whether the jerkin would stand up to the claims made for it by Col. Rivers-Macpherson took place in August 1942 in the Dunwich area of Eastern Command. They were carried out by the 54th (East Anglian) Division (TA), commanded by Maj.Gen.J. Priestman⁽¹⁾. In the same year further trials were carried out by 40 Commando on the Isle of Wight⁽²⁾.

As a result of these trials it was decided to issue the jerkin on a limited basis, to specialist troops such as Commandos and Beach Parties, and — with modifications — for Arctic use. It was not approved for Airborne forces, presumably due to anticipated difficulties over use with parachute harness. Adverse comments included the build-up of heat when wearing the jerkin in hot weather. (There seem also to

have been voices raised about its unsuitability for any but combat use, slovenly appearance, etc., from the 'bull brigade' who craved more than four brass buckles to order polished. . .)

Documents now in the Imperial War Museum, London show an order for 19,000 sets on 3 January 1943. The majority of those issued appear to have gone to the assault units of 21st Army Group for the Normandy landings in June 1944, but the jerkin also saw use in the Mediterranean from the Sicily landings onwards⁽³⁾.

Skeleton assault jerkin

Although the author has been unable to trace any supporting documentation, the equipment known variously as 'skeleton assault harness', 'Bren harness', 'auxiliary Bren pouch vest', etc., was clearly a direct development of the Battle Jerkin; and appears to have been used

alongside the full jerkin in all campaigns, certainly from early 1944. Indeed, it seems generally to have been judged more useful, since it could be worn with many combinations of 1937 Pattern web equipment; and it was in more widespread use than the jerkin in the last six months of the war.

The first version consisted of the same chest pouches as the full jerkin, mounted on very broad shoulder braces uniting behind the shoulders in a broad vertical rear strap, with the same kind of waistband as the full jerkin. The material was dark brown canvas, as used for the 'European' version of the full jerkin. The waistband and chest fastened by the same broad and narrow webbing straps and buckles as the full jerkin, and the pouches by the same cord and toggle arrangement. At the left front of the waistband an extra loop with a reinforced slot was sewn to the material at both ends, forming a frog for a bayonet scabbard. An example in the author's collection is marked to the maker 'H&S' and dated 1943.

A second version differed in four particulars. The chest

Still from a film made by the Crown Film Unit on board SS Durban Castle before the landings at Punta di Castellazzo, Sicily, 10 July 1943. It shows Capt.J.Taplin, commander of P Troop, 41 RM Commando, inspecting his Marines. (For details of uniform worn see the forthcoming second part of 'British Commandos in the Field 1942-45' by Brien Hobbs — Part 1 is published in 'MI' No.26 pp. 8-14.) An interesting detail here is the use of the 'respirator, light' at this date, visible just under the toggle-rope behind Capt. Taplin's right hip. This was the first operation in which the battle jerkin was worn in combat. At least four can be seen here; another picture in this sequence shows only five being worn in the entire Troop, however. (IWM FLM1736)

pouches curve inwards instead of outwards; and the bayonet frog is absent, replaced by an equivalent high on the outside expansion piece of the left hand pouch, with a small retaining strap of material near the bottom of the expansion piece.

Size adjustment is provided at each side of the waist and near the bottom of the rear vertical strap by means of divisions, with sets of four brass eyelets on each edge, through which continuous strings can be passed and tied off as required. Finally, two web straps were fitted centrally to the rear of the waistband so that a special waterbottle carrier could be buckled on. An example in the author's collection is marked, again, to 'H&S' (as are all other examples seen by the author) and dated 1945.

VETERANS' OPINIONS

The popularity of the jerkin varied, as it will with any piece of military equipment. To quote in historical order:

In correspondence with the author the commander of A Troop, 41 RM Cdo. in July 1943, Capt.J.S.Stewart OBE, states that a few Battle Jerkins had been issued for training during the rehearsals at Inverary in January-June 1943. He thought the idea good, but the material used too stiff and rigid, 'like a suit of armour'. Echoing the reaction of the first trials troops, he recalls that 'It was very hot when speed-marching or crawling,



Men of A Tp., 45 RM Cdo. photographed in the assembly area for the Normandy landings, 3 June 1944. The personal equipment worn here is very varied; a combination of 'utility' instead of 'universal' pouches and bergen rucksacks seem popular — in this unit, roughly camouflaged with paint streaks. The man holding the bicycle wears the skeleton harness, and the man behind his right arm an early version of the full jerkin, with narrow chest strap. Note lengths of fabric machine gun belt sewn to sleeves or thighs to hold ready-use ammunition, possibly by snipers (extreme left, and right of bicycle). Right foreground is L/Cpl.H.E. Harden, the troop medical orderly, who would later win the Victoria Cross; note the 'waterbottle, out-size' which he carries slung⁽⁴⁾. (IWM H39038: Capt.Evans)

Right:

From the curved Army-style shoulder title seen in the uncropped print these Commandos photographed in Normandy on 6 June 1944 served with 1st Special Service Bde.; the grinning Thompson gunner wears a first pattern skeleton harness over a 'scrounged' Denison smock, again in conjunction with the A-frame bergen rucksack. (IWM B5075: Capt.Evans)



and it was "all or nothing" — i.e. the whole equipment had to be either worn, or discarded. For the Operation 'Husky' landings at Punta di Castellazzo in Sicily on 10 July 1943 he himself dis-

carded the jerkin, but some of his Marines did use it. Their LCA was hit, and sunk some 400 yards from the beach; they had a long swim and wade, but were still the first across the beach wire.

Cpl.Jack Mason also served with 41 RM Cdo. in Sicily on 10 July 1943. In correspondence with the author he says that to the best of his knowledge they did not use the jerkin; but photographs

show that some men, at least, were indeed wearing jerkins immediately prior to the landings.

In correspondence with the author Mr.G.S.Plim, who served with Q Tp., 40 RM



A



D

(A) Skeleton assault harness, first type. (B), (C) Front and rear views of skeleton assault harness, second type; note size adjustment eyelets and cords, bayonet frog on left hand pouch, and waterbottle carrier attachment. (D) Waterbottle Outsize, seen in some photographs in association with jerkin equipment, possibly only by medical personnel.

B



C





Above:

Break-out from the 3rd Division's beachhead at Lion-sur-Mer towards Colleville-sur-Orne on 6 June 1944; these men of 2nd Bn., East Yorkshire Regt., 8th Bde. wear the battle jerkin with various extra stowage tied over it. (IWM B5035: Sgt. Mapham)

Above right:

D-Day + 1: men of 13th/18th Hussars dig in on the secured beach at Hermanville-sur-Mer — from their lack of RAC pattern helmets, presumably rear echelon personnel. At least six discarded battle jerseys can be seen in the foreground, and more in the distance, suggesting either that the assault waves found them unsatisfactory, or that casualties dumped their kit at this spot the day before. (IWM B5180: Sgt. Mapham)

Right:

Well-known photograph of men of the Polish 3rd (Carpathian) Rifle Division in patrol order, waiting for inspection by Gen. Anders in the Agnone-Carpinone area, Italy, 29 March 1944. The first pattern skeleton harness is worn over snow camouflage suits by the entire patrol; note No.36 grenades hung from chest strap. The use of the harness for patrol work recalls its popularity for raiding operations by No.2 Cdo. in the Mediterranean. (IWM NA134790: Sgt. Christie)



Cdo. in the Albanian landings of July 1944, recalls that his unit landed on Sugar Beach dressed in Battledress,

battle jerseys and cap com-forters as the dress of the day — 'and it was a wet landing'. Battle jerseys were left

behind on the '507 metre line'; Mr. Plim was later sent up with a mule to collect them, but found them gone,

and has always assumed that local partisans had found them. One of the photographs accompanying this



What appear to be German prisoners being brought in by C Coy., No.2 Cdo. after the battle for Spilje, Albania, 29 July 1944. The two Germans at left seem to wear a battle jerkin and a skeleton harness over their uniforms. These jerkins were dumped at the '507 metre line' by the Commandos and later went missing — this photograph may answer the question that has been puzzling the author's correspondent Mr.G.S. Plim for 46 years. (IWM NA17402: 2/Lt.Hopkinson)

Below:

A late use of the battle jerkin in World War II: the unopposed occupation of Corfu by 2nd Special Service Bde., October 1944. Men of No.2 Cdo. (note black-backed dagger beret badges), the first three at least all wearing the full jerkin. The Bren gunner seems to wear his over a German-made smock of Italian camouflage material — a common practice in this theatre of operations. (IWM NA19568: Sgt.Wilson)

article offers a possible alter-

Mr.T.Robbins (10th Bn. RM) recalls, in a letter to the author, that in 1942 he first received the battle jerkin when training with landing craft on the Isle of Wight. He found its large carrying capacity of about 80lb. useful, in eliminating full marching kit. On D-Day he was serving with 47 RM Cdo.; they lost 12 out of their 14 landing craft on the way in to the Normandy beaches, but although they lost many weapons most of the men survived, complete with their battle jerkins, after a swim to the shore — no mean feat, and a testimony to the training and hardihood of the Commandos. **M**

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Notes:

(1) This is taken from the only source which the author can trace, the index to the photographic records held in the Imperial War Museum.



(2) See the forthcoming 'British Commandos in the Field 1942-45 Part 2' by Brien Hobbs, to be published in *Military Illustrated*.

(3) Units known to have used the jerkin in action include: *Sicily and Salerno, 1943* elements 41 RM Cdo., inc. A and part of P Tps.; ? 2 Cdo.; *Mediterranean coastal and island raids, 1944*, and *Italy, 1945* 2 Cdo., in Italy only by Bren gunners; *Normandy landings, NW Europe, 1944* 47 RM

Cdo., elements most other Cdos.; assault units of 3rd Div., e.g. 2nd E.Lancs., 1st S.Yorks. *Walcheren* Norwegian Tp., 10 IA Cdo. Jerkins, and larger numbers of skeleton 'Bren pouch' vests, continued to be used on an individual basis until the end of the war. Brien Hobbs' research is gratefully acknowledged.

(4) Various described to the author under the names 'cavalry' or 'LRDG' waterbottle. The manufacturers of

the example in the author's collection, Hobsons Ltd., have no surviving records. The only description which appears to fit is that of the 'Waterbottle Outsize', accepted into the List of Changes to War Materials and Patterns, Military Stores, 30 April 1941. Any further information would be gratefully received. Its use by medical orderlies, in place of the normal pair of standard bottles, seems logical.

Charles James Napier

PHILIP J. HAYTHORNTHWAITE
Paintings by PETER DENNIS

Colonel George Napier, a younger son of Baron Napier, produced four sons: Sir William (1785–1860), historian of the Peninsular War; Gen. Sir George (1784–1855), who lost an arm in the Peninsula, and wrote one of the most attractive memoirs of the Napoleonic period; Henry (1789–1853), who served in the Royal Navy, retired as a captain, and wrote a learned *Florentine History*; and Charles James, perhaps the most remarkable member of a remarkable dynasty. The family was ancient and noble, and though not affluent was extremely well-connected.

Charles James was born at Whitehall on 10 August 1782, and in 1794 was commissioned an ensign in Arthur Wellesley's 33rd Regiment. He transferred to the 89th, at Netley Camp, where his father held a staff appointment; and then to the 4th, on half-pay, so that he could go back to school. He accompanied his father in skirmishes against the rebels in the 1798 Irish rebellion; and at the age of 17 transferred to the newly-formed Rifle Corps, training under Coote Manningham and Sir John Moore, who inspired all three of the Napier soldier brothers. A quarrel with his commander, William Stewart, hastened Charles' departure to serve as ADC to his second cousin, Gen. H. E. Fox, in Ireland; he received a captaincy in the Royal Staff Corps in 1804, and a majority in the Cape Regiment in 1806, though he never served with the latter, exchanging to the 50th (West Kent) Regt., with which he served in Denmark in 1807.

PENINSULAR SERVICE

At Corunna, as major commanding the 50th, Charles Napier won his first fame

when, with his great friend Maj. Charles Stanhope (Pitt's nephew) he was ordered to lead forward the 50th in an unsupported advance. Though Moore is said to have called 'Well done, my Majors', disaster befell them: Stanhope was killed and Napier isolated. Always short-sighted and on this occasion without his spectacles, he lost his bearings; but fearing to hurry lest the army think him a coward, he began to walk back at a pace he described as leisurely. He was shot in the ankle and overtaken by the French, clubbed and bayoneted in the back, and would have been finished off had not a French drummer named Guibert interceded.

Next morning Marshal Soult sent his own surgeon to attend to the captured Napier's wounds; and 'with a kindness and consideration very uncommon'⁽¹⁾ wrote to Napoleon to request that Napier not be sent a prisoner to France, which 'would have ruined his professional prospects'. Instead he remained with the French headquarters, Soult recommending him to Marshal Ney, who 'treated him rather with the kindness of a friend than the civility of an enemy'⁽²⁾. When a message under flag of truce informed Ney that Napier's mother was mourning him as if dead, Ney allowed him to return to England on the promise that he would not serve again until exchanged — an example of humanity which William Napier described as typical of 'that brave and noble-minded' marshal⁽³⁾.

Charles Napier returned to the Peninsula after exchange, as a volunteer with the Light Division in which his brothers were serving. At

Busaco (where cousin Charles Napier of the Royal Navy also served as an 'amateur'), riding with Wellington's party, Charles James refused to dismount but remained in view of the enemy, implying that to do otherwise would dishonour his regiment; as a result he was shot in the head, breaking his jaw and nose. As he was carried away, he waved his hat and declared 'I could not die at a better moment'⁽⁴⁾. Evidence of the family's high connections is the fact that Napier's mother received the first news from Wellington himself: 'Charles and George were wounded. I saw the former after he was wounded, and he was well and in good spirits, though he had a severe but not dangerous wound in the jaw... I hope it will be some consolation to you to reflect that your sons received their wounds upon an occasion in which the British troops behaved so well'⁽⁵⁾.

Charles joined the 102nd as lieutenant-colonel in 1811 after his recovery, serving against the United States in 1813, before exchanging back into the 50th. Believing active service was ended he went on half-pay, which enabled him to be present as a volunteer at the storm of Cambrai.



In 1819 he became Inspecting Field Officer at Corfu, and from 1822 to 1830 was governor of Cephalonia. His record here illuminates two of his main traits of character: intense humanity, and unwillingness to take orders. He was a benevolent despot in Cephalonia, and his rule was greatly beneficial to the inhabitants; but quarrels with his superior, the high commissioner of the Ionian Islands, led to his abrupt removal from office in 1830, and he retired in disgust, moving to Normandy after the death of his first wife.

In this period he turned to writing to occupy his time, idleness being anathema; his output was large, and included accounts of his rule in Cephalonia and a memoir on his road-building programme, works on colonization (especially regarding Australia) and on military law, a translation of de Vigny's *Servitude et Grandeur Militaires*, and even historical romances, *William the Conqueror* (published 1858) and the lost *Harold*.

In 1839 he was appointed to command the Northern District, then in ferment due to Chartist agitation. His humanitarian inclinations led him to sympathise with the reformers; he attended Chartist meetings in civilian clothes, and told their leaders that provided they remained peaceable he would not interfere, thus maintaining law and order whilst avoiding political repression — a rare achievement. As soon as the crisis had passed he resigned from a post which must have caused him much anguish.

TO INDIA

At a time of life when others would have considered retirement Napier was offered a staff appointment in India,

Napier in Indian campaign uniform: an engraving after Smart. (Several portraits of Napier at this period are attributed to or after Smart, though it is not clear which Smart was responsible: see Ormond p.333). Napier wears a native jacket over his frock-coat; note the unusual length of the aiguillette. The breast-star is presumably that of the Order of the Bath.

Engraving by an unidentified artist, perhaps after a photograph, showing Napier without the extravagant beard and moustache which he wore on campaign.

which despite his age (59) and indifferent health he accepted in the hope of earning enough to provide for his daughters. In September 1842 he was ordered to Sind (Scinde) in the expectation of conflict with the Baluchi rulers. Probably Napier was anxious to overthrow the Baluchis, who exercised a tyrannical rule over the inhabitants of Sind much like that imposed upon Egypt by the Mamelukes; and when in February 1843 the British residency in Hyderabad was attacked, he began a rapid campaign to effect its relief.

With only 2,800 men he overthrew 30,000 Baluchis at Miani (Meeanee), a brilliant but hard-won success on 17 February. Following a forced march through desert in intense heat, he inflicted another defeat on the Baluchis at Hyderabad (24 March). He consolidated his victory, reputedly announcing to the Governor-General 'Peccavi' ('I have sinned'), though in fact *Punch* was probably responsible for a pun which would delight any gentleman in those days of widespread Classical education. The conquest of Sind stabilised India's western frontier, a prodigious achievement against immense odds and in rapid time, which established Napier as the greatest Indian general of his day.

His administration as governor of the subjugated province involved the conquest of warlike hill tribes, and was marked by great fairness coupled with ruthlessness against those who rebelled, to the extent that he was nicknamed 'Satan's brother'. His rule was beneficial to the ordinary native inhabitants, however, who were relieved of the previous Baluchi tyranny, and Napier abolished slavery and *suttee* (the burning of wives upon the pyres of their husbands).

As before, Napier's temperament brought him into

conflict with every authority from the Governor-General downwards, and in 1847 he returned home. His brief sojourn in England (where he received a hero's welcome) was occupied, not surprisingly, with quarrels with the directors of the East India Company; but despite this the inconclusive action of Chillianwalla in the 2nd Sikh War (13 January 1849) compelled the Company to appoint Napier to command their forces. He left England immediately (persuaded by his old friend and mentor, Wellington, who remarked 'If you don't go, I must'⁽⁶⁾); but Gough's victory of Gujrat (21 February 1849) ended the war before Napier could assume command.

His last term in India ended in a quarrel as usual, when a reprimand from the Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, led to Napier's resignation and return to England. His health, never robust, had suffered severely in the Indian climate, and he did not long enjoy his retirement: he died at Oaklands, near Portsmouth, on 29 August 1853, beneath the stands of Baluchi colours captured at Miani.

Charles James Napier's quarrels with those in authority, and the temperament which caused them, have cast

a shadow over his very considerable abilities as a commander; but never in doubt was his humanitarian concern for his fellow man, irrespective of nationality or station (as shown by his political opinions, which might have been described as 'radical'), and for the soldiers under his command. When a bronze statue by G.G. Adams was erected in his honour in Trafalgar Square by public subscription, the greatest number of subscribers were private soldiers: nothing could have been more appropriate.

Notes:

- (1) *History of the War in the Peninsula*, Sir W.F.P. Napier, London 1832, I p.489
- (2) *ibid.*
- (3) *ibid.*
- (4) Lawrence (see sources), p.44
- (5) *Dispatches of Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington*, ed.J. Gurwood, London 1834-39, VI p.470
- (6) Lawrence, p.177.

Sources

Several biographies of Napier have been published, the earliest being his brother William's *Life and Opinions of General Charles Napier* (London 1857), and *General Sir C. Napier and the Directors of the East Indian Company* (1857); Sir Charles Napier, W.N. Bruce (1855); and the biographies by MacColl (*Career and Character*, 1857) and McDougall (*Conqueror and Governor of Scinde*, 1860). An excellent modern work which concentrates more upon his character than events is *Charles Napier, Friend and Fighter*, Lady R. Lawrence, London 1952.



Peter Dennis's reconstructions shown (top) Napier as a major in the 50th Regiment at Corunna, 1809. He wears the uniform of the 50th, including an 'unlaced' coat with the regimental black facings, and epaulettes of regimental pattern: an extant example (reputedly Stanhope's) has silver lace and longitudinal black lines on the strap, a metal crescent, and a silver oval star-badge with a scarlet centre bearing a crown over '50' in gold, within a blue strap inscribed 'WEST KENT'. Napier noted that he carried a sabre at Corunna — here in the 1803 flank company pattern — and as his sword belt is described as being shot away, presumably he wore the waist belt favoured by field officers. He also noted that he was wearing 'pantaloon' which were torn when his French captors stole his watch.

(Below) General Sir Charles Napier, India, 1843. This figure is drawn from several depictions of Napier's Indian campaign uniform, consisting of the Staff pattern dark blue frock-coat with blue velvet facings and gilt buttons (shown spaced singly in some portraits, in pairs in another: regulations indicated single spacing for generals, lieutenant-generals in threes, major- and brigadier-generals in pairs). The aiguillette is worn in a somewhat eccentric manner, and one portrait attributed to Smart may even show it looped around his neck. The head-dress is the sun-helmet of unregulated pattern shown in at least two contemporary studies (Napier noted that he often wore the felt helmet with a wet towel wrapped around); and over the frock-coat is a native posh-teen, a fleece-lined leather coat. The sword is apparently a non-military, court-style weapon, though another campaign sketch suggests the use of a hefty, native tulwar style weapon. Two portraits show white overalls instead of the breeches and long boots taken here from a drawing by William Edwards, 86th, in his *Sketches in Scinde* (1846), lithographed by Charles Haghe.

Napier was a most distinctive figure, partly from his thick spectacles and his often immense side-whiskers and long and unkempt hair and beard, partly from the laxity of his uniform. A sketch showing his dress to meet the chiefs of Sind depicts a hunting-cap, dirty flannel jacket, coarse white cloth trousers greatly sagging for want of braces, worn socks, and what appear to be slippers! A comprehensive list of Napier portraits is given in *Early Victorian Portraits*, R.Ormond, National Portrait Gallery, London 1973, pp.332-35. Others are listed in the Index to *British Military Costume Prints*, Ogilby Trust, London 1972, though he should be not confused with depictions of Admiral Sir Charles Napier, 1786-1860.

Charles James Napier

*Major, 50th Foot,
Corruna, 1809*



*General, Scinde,
1843*

